ESSAYS

AND

TREATISES

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

By DAVID HUME, Esq;

VOL. II.

CONTAINING,

An ENQUIRY concerning HUMAN UNDERSTANDING;

A DISSERTATION on the PASSIONS;

An ENQUIRY concerning the PRINCIPLES of MORALS;

AND

The NATURAL HISTORY of RELIGION.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

MOST of the principles, and reaſonings, contained in this volume, were publiſhed in a work in three volumes, called *A Treatiſe of Human Nature:* A work which the Author had projected before he left College, and which he wrote and publiſhed not long after. But not finding it ſucceſsful, he was ſenſible of his error in going to the preſs too early, and he caſt the whole anew in the following pieces, where ſome negligences in his former reaſoning, and more in the expreſſion, are, he hopes, corrected. Yet ſeveral writers, who have honoured the Author's Philoſophy with anſwers, have taken care to direct all their batteries againſt that juvenile work, which the Author never acknowledged, and have affected to triumph in any advantages, which, they imagined, they had obtained over it: A practice very contrary to all rules of candour and fair-dealing, and a ſtrong inſtance of thoſe polemical artifices, which a bigotted zeal thinks itſelf authoriſed to employ. Henceforth, the Author deſires, that the following Pieces may alone be regarded as containing his philoſophical ſentiments and principles.

THE

CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

An ENQUIRY concerning HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

Section | Page

I. OF the different Species of Philoſophy 3
II. Of the Origin of Ideas 17
III. Of the Aſſociation of Ideas 23
IV. Sceptical Doubts concerning the Operations of the Underſtanding 27
V. Sceptical Solution of theſe Doubts 45
VI. Of Probability 61
VII. Of the Idea of neceſſary Connexion 65
VIII. Of Liberty and Neceſſity 85
IX. Of the Reaſon of Animals 111
X. Of Miracles 117
XI. Of a particular Providence and of a future State 141
XII. Of the academical or ſceptical Philoſohy 159

A Diſſertation on the Paſſions 177

CONTENTS.

An ENQUIRY concerning the PRINCIPLES OF MORALS.

Section — Page

I. OF the general Principles of Morals 215
II. Of Benevolence 223
III. Of Juſtice 231
IV. Of political Society 253
V. Why Utility pleaſes 261
VI. Of Qualities uſeful to Ourſelves 281
VII. Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Ourſelves 299
VIII. Of Qualities immediately agreeable to Others 311
IX. Concluſion 319

APPENDIX.

I. Concerning moral Sentiment 337
II. Of Self-love 349
III. Some farther Conſiderations with regard to Juſtice 357
IV. Of ſome verbal Diſputes 365
A Dialogue 377

The NATURAL HISTORY of RELIGION.

Section — Page

Introduction 401
I. THAT Polytheiſm was the primary Religion of Men 402
II. Origin of Polytheiſm 407
III. The ſame Subject continued 410
IV. Deities not conſidered as Creators or Formers of the World 415

V. Various

CONTENTS.

Section
V. Various Forms of Polytheiſm: Allegory, Hero-Worſhip Page 422
VI. Origin of Theiſm from Polytheiſm 426
VII. Confirmation of this Doctrine 432
VIII. Flux and Reflux of Polytheiſm and Theiſm 434
IX. Compariſon of theſe Religions with regard to Perſecution and Toleration 436
X. With regard to Courage or Abaſement 440
XI. With regard to Reaſon or Abſurdity 441
XII. With regard to Doubt or Conviction 444
XIII. Impious Conceptions of the divine Nature in popular Religions of both Kinds 457
XIV. Bad Influence of popular Religions on Morality 461
XV. General Corollary. 466

AN

AN

ENQUIRY

CONCERNING

HUMAN

UNDERSTANDING.

SECTION I.

Of the DIFFERENT SPECIES of PHILOSOPHY.

MORAL philoſophy, or the ſcience of human nature, may be treated after two different manners; each of which has its peculiar merit, and may contribute to the entertainment, inſtruction, and reformation of mankind. The one conſiders man chiefly as born for action; and as influenced in his meaſures by taſte and ſentiment; purſuing one object, and avoiding another, according to the value which theſe objects ſeem to poſſeſs, and according to the light in which they preſent themſelves. As virtue, of all objects, is allowed to be the moſt valuable, this ſpecies of philoſophers paint her in the moſt amiable colours; borrowing all helps from poetry and eloquence, and treating their ſubject in an eaſy and obvious manner, and ſuch as is beſt fitted to pleaſe the imagination, and engage the affections. They ſelect the moſt ſtriking obſervations and inſtances from common life; place oppoſite characters in a proper contraſt; and alluring us into the paths of virtue by the views of glory and happineſs, direct our ſteps in theſe paths by the ſoundeſt precepts and moſt illuſtrious examples. They make us *feel* the difference between vice and virtue; they excite and regulate our ſentiments; and ſo they can but bend our hearts

to the love of probity and true honour, they think, that they have fully attained the end of all their labours.

The other ſpecies of philoſophers conſider man in the light of a reaſonable rather than an active being, and endeavour to form his underſtanding more than cultivate his manners. They regard human nature as a ſubject of ſpeculation; and with a narrow ſcrutiny examine it, in order to find thoſe principles, which regulate our underſtanding, excite our ſentiments, and make us approve or blame any particular object, action, or behaviour. They think it a reproach to all literature, that philoſophy ſhould not yet have fixed, beyond controverſy, the foundation of morals, reaſoning, and criticiſm; and ſhould for ever talk of truth and falſehood, vice and virtue, beauty and deformity, without being able to determine the ſource of theſe diſtinctions. While they attempt this arduous taſk, they are deterred by no difficulties; but proceeding from particular inſtances to general principles, they ſtill puſh on their enquiries to principles more general, and reſt not ſatisfied till they arrive at thoſe original principles, by which, in every ſcience, all human curioſity muſt be bounded. Though their ſpeculations ſeem abſtract, and even unintelligible to common readers, they aim at the approbation of the learned and the wiſe; and think themſelves ſufficiently compenſated for the labour of their whole lives, if they can diſcover ſome hidden truths, which may contribute to the inſtruction of poſterity.

It is certain that the eaſy and obvious philoſophy, will always, with the generality of mankind, have the preference above the accurate and abſtruſe; and by many will be recommended, not only as more agreeable, but more uſeful than the other. It enters more into common

life;

life; moulds the heart and affections; and, by touching those principles which actuate men, reforms their conduct, and brings them nearer to that model of perfection which it describes. On the contrary, the abstruse philosophy, being founded on a turn of mind, which cannot enter into business and action, vanishes when the philosopher leaves the shade, and comes into open day; nor can its principles easily retain any influence over our conduct and behaviour. The feelings of our heart, the agitation of our passions, the vehemence of our affections, dissipate all its conclusions, and reduce the profound philosopher to a mere plebeian.

This also must be confessed, that the most durable, as well as justest fame, has been acquired by the easy philosophy, and that abstract reasoners seem hitherto to have enjoyed only a momentary reputation, from the caprice or ignorance of their own age, but have not been able to support their renown with more equitable posterity. It is easy for a profound philosopher to commit a mistake in his subtile reasonings; and one mistake is the necessary parent of another, while he pushes on his consequences, and is not deterred from embracing any conclusion, by its unusual appearance, or its contradiction to popular opinion. But a philosopher, who purposes only to represent the common sense of mankind in more beautiful and more engaging colours, if by accident he falls into error, goes no farther; but renewing his appeal to common sense, and the natural sentiments of the mind, returns into the right path, and secures himself from any dangerous illusions. The fame of CICERO flourishes at present; but that of ARISTOTLE is utterly decayed. LA BRUYERE passes the seas, and still maintains his reputation: But the glory of MALEBRANCHE is confined

fined to his own nation, and to his own age. And ADDISON, perhaps, will be read with pleaſure, when LOCKE ſhall be entirely forgotten.

The mere philoſopher is a character, which is commonly but little acceptable in the world, as being ſuppoſed to contribute nothing either to the advantage or pleaſure of ſociety; while he lives remote from communication with mankind, and is wrapped up in principles and notions equally remote from their comprehenſion. On the other hand, the mere ignorant is ſtill more deſpiſed; nor is any thing deemed a ſurer ſign of an illiberal genius in an age and nation where the ſciences flouriſh, than to be entirely deſtitute of all reliſh for thoſe noble entertainments. The moſt perfect character is ſuppoſed to lie between thoſe extremes; retaining an equal ability and taſte for books, company, and buſineſs; preſerving in converſation that diſcernment and delicacy which ariſe from polite letters; and in buſineſs, that probity and accuracy which are the natural reſult of a juſt philoſophy. In order to diffuſe and cultivate ſo accompliſhed a character, nothing can be more uſeful than compoſitions of the eaſy ſtyle and manner, which draw not too much from life, require no deep application or retreat to be comprehended, and ſend back the ſtudent among mankind full of noble ſentiments and wiſe precepts, applicable to every exigence of human life. By means of ſuch compoſitions, virtue becomes amiable, ſcience agreeable, company inſtructive, and retirement entertaining.

Man is a reaſonable being; and as ſuch, receives from ſcience his proper food and nouriſhment: But ſo narrow are the bounds of human underſtanding, that little ſatisfaction can be hoped for in this particular, either from the extent or ſecurity of his acquiſitions. Man is a ſociable,

no leſs than a reaſonable being: But neither can he always enjoy company agreeable and amuſing, or preſerve the proper reliſh for them. Man is alſo an active being; and from that diſpoſition, as well as from the various neceſſities of human life, muſt ſubmit to buſineſs and occupation: But the mind requires ſome relaxation, and cannot always ſupport its bent to care and induſtry. It ſeems, then, that nature has pointed out a mixed kind of life as moſt ſuitable to human race, and ſecretly admoniſhed them to allow none of theſe biaſſes to *draw* too much, ſo as to incapacitate them for other occupations and entertainments. Indulge your paſſion for ſcience, ſays ſhe, but let your ſcience be human, and ſuch as may have a direct reference to action and ſociety. Abſtruſe thought and profound reſearches I prohibit, and will ſeverely puniſh, by the penſive melancholy which they introduce, by the endleſs uncertainty in which they involve you, and by the cold reception which your pretended diſcoveries ſhall meet with, when communicated. Be a philoſopher; but, amidſt all your philoſophy, be ſtill a man.

Were the generality of mankind contented to prefer the eaſy philoſophy to the abſtract and profound, without throwing any blame or contempt on the latter, it might not be improper, perhaps, to comply with this general opinion, and allow every man to enjoy, without oppoſition, his own taſte and ſentiment. But as the matter is often carried farther, even to the abſolute rejecting of all profound reaſonings, or what is commonly called *metaphyſics*, we ſhall now proceed to conſider what can reaſonably be pleaded in their behalf.

We may begin with obſerving, that one conſiderable advantage, which reſults from the accurate and abſtract philoſophy, is, its ſubſerviency to

to the eaſy and humane; which, without the former, can never attain a ſufficient degree of exactneſs in its ſentiments, precepts, or reaſonings. All polite letters are nothing but pictures of human life in various attitudes and ſituations; and inſpire us with different ſentiments, of praiſe or blame, admiration or ridicule, according to the qualities of the object, which they ſet before us. An artiſt muſt be better qualified to ſucceed in this undertaking, who, beſides a delicate taſte and a quick apprehenſion, poſſeſſes an accurate knowledge of the internal fabric, the operations of the underſtanding, the workings of the paſſions, and the various ſpecies of ſentiment which diſcriminate vice and virtue. How painful ſoever this inward ſearch or enquiry may appear, it becomes, in ſome meaſure, requiſite to thoſe, who would deſcribe with ſucceſs the obvious and outward appearances of life and manners. The anatomiſt preſents to the eye the moſt hideous and diſagreeable objects; but his ſcience is uſeful to the painter in delineating even a VENUS or an HELEN. While the latter employs all the richeſt colours of his art, and gives his figures the moſt graceful and engaging airs; he muſt ſtill carry his attention to the inward ſtructure of the human body, the poſition of the muſcles, the fabric of the bones, and the uſe and figure of every part or organ. Accuracy is, in every caſe, advantageous to beauty, and juſt reaſoning to delicate ſentiment. In vain would we exalt the one by depreciating the other.

Beſides, we may obſerve, in every art or profeſſion, even thoſe which moſt concern life or action, that a ſpirit of accuracy, however acquired, carries all of them nearer their perfection, and renders them more ſubſervient to the intereſts of ſociety. And though a philoſopher may live remote from buſineſs, the genius of philoſophy, if carefully

carefully cultivated by ſeveral, muſt gradually diffuſe itſelf throughout the whole ſociety, and beſtow a ſimilar correctneſs on every art and calling. The politician will acquire greater foreſight and ſubtilty, in the ſubdividing and balancing of power; the lawyer more method and finer principles in his reaſonings; and the general more regularity in his diſcipline, and more caution in his plans and operations. The ſtability of modern governments above the ancient, and the accuracy of modern philoſophy, have improved, and probably will ſtill improve, by ſimilar gradations.

Were there no advantage to be reaped from theſe ſtudies, beyond the gratification of an innocent curioſity, yet ought not even this to be deſpiſed; as being one acceſſion to thoſe few ſafe and harmleſs pleaſures, which are beſtowed on human race. The ſweeteſt and moſt inoffenſive path of life leads through the avenues of ſcience and learning; and whoever can either remove any obſtructions in this way, or open up any new proſpect, ought ſo far to be eſteemed a benefactor to mankind. And though theſe reſearches may appear painful and fatiguing, it is with ſome minds as with ſome bodies, which being endowed with vigorous and florid health, require ſevere exerciſe, and reap a pleaſure from what, to the generality of mankind, may ſeem burdenſome and laborious. Obſcurity, indeed, is painful to the mind as well as to the eye; but to bring light from obſcurity, by whatever labour, muſt needs be delightful and rejoicing.

But this obſcurity in the profound and abſtract philoſophy, is objected to, not only as painful and fatiguing, but as the inevitable ſource of uncertainty and error. Here indeed lies the juſteſt and moſt plauſible objection againſt a conſiderable part of metaphyſics, that they are not properly a ſcience; but

but arise either from the fruitless efforts of human vanity, which would penetrate into subjects utterly inaccessible to the understanding, or from the craft of popular superstitions, which, being unable to defend themselves on fair ground, raise these intangling brambles to cover and protect their weakness. Chased from the open country, these robbers fly into the forest, and lie in wait to break in upon every unguarded avenue of the mind, and overwhelm it with religious fears and prejudices. The stoutest antagonist, if he remit his watch a moment, is oppressed. And many, through cowardice and folly, open the gates to the enemies, and willingly receive them with reverence and submission, as their legal sovereigns.

But is this a sufficient reason, why philosophers should desist from such researches, and leave superstition still in possession of her retreat? Is it not proper to draw an opposite conclusion, and perceive the necessity of carrying the war into the most secret recesses of the enemy? In vain do we hope, that men, from frequent disappointment, will at last abandon such airy sciences, and discover the proper province of human reason. For, besides, that many persons find too sensible an interest in perpetually recalling such topics; besides this, I say, the motive of blind despair can never reasonably have place in the sciences; since, however unsuccessful former attempts may have proved, there is still room to hope, that the industry, good fortune, or improved sagacity of succeeding generations may reach discoveries unknown to former ages. Each adventurous genius will still leap at the arduous prize, and find himself stimulated, rather than discouraged, by the failures of his predecessors; while he hopes that the glory of atchieving so hard an adventure is reserved for him alone. The only method of freeing learning, at

at once, from these abstruse questions, is to enquire seriously into the nature of human understanding, and shew, from an exact analysis of its powers and capacity, that it is by no means fitted for such remote and abstruse subjects. We must submit to this fatigue, in order to live at ease ever after: And must cultivate true metaphysics with some care, in order to destroy the false and adulterate. Indolence, which, to some persons, affords a safeguard against this deceitful philosophy, is, with others, overbalanced by curiosity; and despair, which, at some moments, prevails, may give place afterwards to sanguine hopes and expectations. Accurate and just reasoning is the only catholic remedy, fitted for all persons and all dispositions; and is alone able to subvert that abstruse philosophy and metaphysical jargon, which, being mixed up with popular superstition, renders it in a manner impenetrable to careless reasoners, and gives it the air of science and wisdom.

Besides this advantage of rejecting, after deliberate enquiry, the most uncertain and disagreeable part of learning, there are many positive advantages, which result from an accurate scrutiny into the powers and faculties of human nature. It is remarkable concerning the operations of the mind, that, though most intimately present to us, yet, whenever they become the object of reflection, they seem involved in obscurity; nor can the eye readily find those lines and boundaries, which discriminate and distinguish them. The objects are too fine to remain long in the same aspect or situation; and must be apprehended in an instant, by a superior penetration, derived from nature, and improved by habit and reflection. It becomes, therefore, no inconsiderable part of science barely to know the different operations of the mind, to separate them from each other, to class them under their proper heads, and to correct all that seeming

ing diſorder, in which they lie involved, when made the object of reflection and enquiry. This taſk of ordering and diſtinguiſhing, which has no merit, when performed with regard to external bodies, the objects of our ſenſes, riſes in its value, when directed towards the operations of the mind, in proportion to the difficulty and labour, which we meet with in performing it. And if we can go no farther than this mental geography, or delineation of the diſtinct parts and powers of the mind, it is at leaſt a ſatisfaction to go ſo far; and the more obvious this ſcience may appear (and it is by no means obvious) the more contemptible ſtill muſt the ignorance of it be eſteemed, in all pretenders to learning and philoſophy.

Nor can there remain any ſuſpicion, that this ſcience is uncertain and chimerical; unleſs we ſhould entertain ſuch a ſcepticiſm as is entirely ſubverſive of all ſpeculation, and even action. It cannot be doubted, that the mind is endowed with ſeveral powers and faculties, that theſe powers are diſtinct from each other, that what is really diſtinct to the immediate perception may be diſtinguiſhed by reflection; and conſequently, that there is a truth and falſehood in all propoſitions on this ſubject, and a truth and falſehood, which lie not beyond the compaſs of human underſtanding. There are many obvious diſtinctions of this kind, ſuch as thoſe between the will and underſtanding, the imagnation and paſſions, which fall within the comprehenſion of every human creature; and the finer and more philoſophical diſtinctions are no leſs real and certain, though more difficult to be comprehended. Some inſtances, eſpecially late ones, of ſucceſs in theſe enquiries, may give us a juſter notion of the certainty and ſolidity of this branch of learning. And ſhall we eſteem it worthy the labour of a philoſopher to give us a true ſyſtem of the planets, and adjuſt the poſition and order of

thoſe

thoſe remote bodies; while we affect to overlook thoſe, who, with ſo much ſucceſs, delineate the parts of the mind, in which we are ſo intimately concerned?

But may we not hope, that philoſophy, if cultivated with care, and encouraged by the attention of the public, may carry its reſearches ſtill farther, and diſcover, at leaſt in ſome degree, the ſecret ſprings and principles, by which the human mind is actuated in its operations? Aſtronomers had long contented themſelves with proving, from the phænomena, the true motions, order, and magnitude of the heavenly bodies: Till a philoſopher, at laſt, aroſe, who ſeems, from the happieſt reaſoning, to have determined the laws and forces, by which the revolutions of the planets are governed and directed. The like has been performed with regard to other parts of nature. And there is no reaſon to deſpair of equal ſucceſs of our enquiries concerning the mental powers and œconomy, if proſecuted with equal capacity and caution. It is probable, that one operation and principle of the mind depends on another; which, again, may be reſolved into one more general and univerſal: And how far theſe reſearches may poſſibly be carried, it will be difficult for us, before, or even after, a careful trial, exactly to determine. This is certain, that attempts of this kind are every day made even by thoſe who philoſophize the moſt negligently: And nothing can be more requiſite than to enter upon the enterprize with thorough care and attention; that, if it lie within the compaſs of human underſtanding, it may at laſt be happily atchieved; if not, it may at laſt be rejected with ſome confidence and ſecurity. This laſt concluſion, ſurely, is not deſirable; nor ought it to be embraced too raſhly. For how much muſt we diminiſh from the beauty and value of this ſpecies of philoſophy, upon ſuch a ſuppoſition? Moraliſts have hitherto been accuſtomed,

tomed, when they conſidered the vaſt multitude and diverſity of thoſe actions that excite our approbation or diſlike, to ſearch for ſome common principle, on which this variety of ſentiments might depend. And though they have ſometimes carried the matter too far, by their paſſion for ſome one general principle; it muſt, however, be confeſſed, that they are excuſable in expecting to find ſome general principles, into which all the vices and virtues were juſtly to be reſolved. The like has been the endeavour of critics, logicians, and even politicians: Nor have their attempts been wholly unſucceſsful; though perhaps longer time, greater accuracy, and more ardent application may bring theſe ſciences ſtill nearer their perfection. To throw up at once all pretenſions of this kind may juſtly be deemed more raſh, precipitate, and dogmatical, than even the boldeſt and moſt affirmative philoſophy, that has ever attempted to impoſe its crude dictates and principles on mankind.

What though theſe reaſonings concerning human nature ſeems abſtract, and of difficult comprehenſion? This affords no preſumption of their falſehood. On the contrary, it ſeems impoſſible, that what has hitherto eſcaped ſo many wiſe and profound philoſophers can be very obvious and eaſy. And whatever pains theſe reſearches may coſt us, we may think ourſelves ſufficiently rewarded, not only in point of profit but of pleaſure, if by that means, we can make any addition to our ſtock of knowledge, in ſubjects of ſuch unſpeakable importance.

But as, after all, the abſtractedneſs of theſe ſpeculations is no recommendation, but rather a diſadvantage to them, and as this difficulty may perhaps be ſurmounted by care and art, and the avoiding of all unneceſſary detail, we have, in the following enquiry, attempted to throw ſome light upon ſubjects, from which uncertainty has hitherto deterred

deterred the wiſe, and obſcurity the ignorant. Happy, if we can unite the boundaries of the different ſpecies of philoſophy, by reconciling profound enquiry with clearneſs, and truth with novelty! And ſtill more happy, if, reaſoning in this eaſy manner, we can undermine the foundations of an abſtruſe philoſophy, which ſeems to have hitherto ſerved only as a ſhelter to ſuperſtition, and a cover to abſurdity and error!

SECTION II.

Of the ORIGIN of IDEAS.

EVERY one will readily allow that there is a considerable difference between the perceptions of the mind, when a man feels the pain of excessive heat, or the pleasure of moderate warmth, and when he afterwards recalls to his memory this sensation, or anticipates it by his imagination. These faculties may mimic or copy the perceptions of the senses; but they never can entirely reach the force and vivacity of the original sentiment. The utmost we say of them, even when they operate with greatest vigour, is, that they represent their object in so lively a manner, that we could *almost* say we feel or see it: But, except the mind be disordered by disease or madness, they never can arrive at such a pitch of vivacity, as to render these perceptions altogether undistinguishable. All the colours of poetry, however splendid, can never paint natural objects in such a manner as to make the description be taken for a real landskip. The most lively thought is still inferior to the dullest sensation.

We may observe a like distinction to run through all the other perceptions of the mind. A man in a fit of anger, is actuated in a very different manner from one who only thinks of that emotion. If you tell me, that any person is in love, I easily understand your meaning, and form a just conception of his situation; but never can

miſtake that conception for the real diſorders and agitations of the paſſion. When we reflect on our paſt ſentiments and affections, our thought is a faithful mirror, and copies its objects truly; but the colours which it employs are faint and dull, in compariſon of thoſe in which our original perceptions were clothed. It requires no nice diſcernment or metaphyſical head to mark the diſtinction between them.

Here therefore we divide all the perceptions of the mind into two claſſes or ſpecies, which are diſtinguiſhed by their different degrees of force and vivacity. The leſs forcible and lively are commonly denominated Thoughts or Ideas. The other ſpecies want a name in our language, and in moſt others; I ſuppoſe, becauſe it was not requiſite for any, but philoſophical purpoſes, to rank them under a general term or appellation. Let us, therefore, uſe a little freedom, and call them Impreſſions; employing that word in a ſenſe ſomewhat different from the uſual. By the term *impreſſion*, then, I mean all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, or ſee, or feel, love or hate, or deſire, or will. And impreſſions, are diſtinguiſhed from ideas, which are the leſs lively perceptions, of which we are conſcious, when we reflect on any of thoſe ſenſations or movements above mentioned.

Nothing, at firſt view, may ſeem more unbounded than the thought of man, which not only eſcapes all human power and authority, but is not even reſtrained within the limits of nature and reality. To form monſters, and join incongruous ſhapes and appearances, coſts the imagination no more trouble than to conceive the moſt natural and familiar objects. And while the body is confined to one planet, along which it creeps with pain and difficulty; the thought can in an inſtant tranſport us into the moſt diſtant regions of the univerſe;

verſe; or even beyond the univerſe, into the unbounded chaos, where nature is ſuppoſed to lie in total confuſion. What never was ſeen, or heard of, may yet be conceived; nor is any thing beyond the power of thought, except what implies an abſolute contradiction.

But though our thought ſeems to poſſeſs this unbounded liberty, we ſhall find, upon a nearer examination, that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, tranſpoſing, augmenting, or diminiſhing the materials afforded us by the ſenſes and experience. When we think of a golden mountain, we only join two conſiſtent ideas, *gold*, and *mountain*, with which we were formerly acquainted. A virtuous horſe we can conceive; becauſe, from our own feeling, we can conceive virtue; and this we may unite to the figure and ſhape of a horſe, which is an animal familiar to us. In ſhort, all the materials of thinking are derived either from our outward or inward ſentiment: The mixture and compoſition of theſe belongs alone to the mind and will. Or, to expreſs myſelf in philoſophical language, all our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impreſſions or more lively ones.

To prove this, the two following arguments will, I hope, be ſufficient. Firſt, when we analyſe our thoughts or ideas, however compounded or ſublime, we always find, that they reſolve themſelves into ſuch ſimple ideas as were copied from a precedent feeling or ſentiment. Even thoſe ideas, which, at firſt view, ſeem the moſt wide of this origin, are found, upon a nearer ſcrutiny, to be derived from it. The idea of God, as meaning an infinitely intelligent, wiſe, and good Being, ariſes from reflecting on the operations of our own mind, and augmenting,

without limit, those qualities of goodness and wisdom. We may prosecute this enquiry to what length we please; where we shall always find, that every idea which we examine is copied from a similar impression. Those who would assert, that this position is not universally true nor without exception, have only one, and that an easy method of refuting it; by producing that idea, which, in their opinion, is not derived from this source. It will be incumbent on us, if we would maintain our doctrine, to produce the impression or lively perception, which corresponds to it.

Secondly. If it happen, from a defect of the organ, that a man is not susceptible of any species of sensation, we always find, that he is as little susceptible of the correspondent ideas. A blind man can form no notion of colours; a deaf man of sounds. Restore either of them that sense, in which he is deficient; by opening this new inlet for his sensations, you open an inlet for the ideas; and he finds no difficulty in conceiving these objects. The case is the same, if the object, proper for exciting any sensation, has never been applied to the organ. A Laplander or Negroe has no notion of the relish of wine. And though there are few or no instances of the like deficiency in the mind, where a person has never felt or is wholly incapable of a sentiment or passion, that belongs to his species; yet we find the same observation to take place in a less degree. A man of mild manners can form no idea of inveterate revenge or cruelty; nor can a selfish heart easily conceive the heights of friendship and generosity. It is readily allowed, that other beings may possess many senses of which we can have no conception; because the ideas of them have never been introduced to us, in the only manner, by which an idea can have access to the mind, to wit, by the actual feeling and sensation.

There

There is, however, one contradictory phænomenon, which may prove, that it is not absolutely impossible for ideas to arise, independent of their correspondent impressions. I believe it will readily be allowed, that the several distinct ideas of colour, which enter by the eye, or those of sound, which are conveyed by the ear, are really different from each other; though, at the same time, resembling. Now if this be true of different colours, it must be no less so of the different shades of the same colour; and each shade produces a distinct idea, independent of the rest. For if this should be denied, it is possible, by the continual gradation of shades, to run a colour insensibly into what is most remote from it; and if you will not allow any of the means to be different, you cannot, without absurdity, deny the extremes to be the same. Suppose, therefore, a person to have enjoyed his sight for thirty years, and to have become perfectly acquainted with colours of all kinds, except one particular shade of blue, for instance, which it never has been his fortune to meet with. Let all the different shades of that colour, except that single one, be placed before him, descending gradually from the deepest to the lightest; it is plain, that he will perceive a blank, where that shade is wanting, and will be sensible, that there is a greater distance in that place between the contiguous colours than in any other. Now I ask, whether it be possible for him, from his own imagination, to supply this deficiency, and raise up to himself the idea of that particular shade, though it had never been conveyed to him by his senses? I believe there are few but will be of opinion that he can: And this may serve as a proof, that the simple ideas are not always, in every instance, derived from the correspondent impressions; though this instance is so singular, that it is scarcely worth our observing, and does not merit,

rit, that for it alone we ſhould alter our general maxim.

Here, therefore, is a propoſition, which not only ſeems, in itſelf, ſimple and intelligible; but, if a proper uſe were made of it, might render every diſpute equally intelligible, and baniſh all that jargon, which has ſo long taken poſſeſſion of metaphyſical reaſonings, and drawn diſgrace upon them. All ideas, eſpecially abſtract ones, are naturally faint and obſcure: The mind has but a ſlender hold of them: They are apt to be confounded with other reſembling ideas; and when we have often employed any term, though without a diſtinct meaning, we are apt to imagine it has a determinate idea, annexed to it. On the contrary, all impreſſions, that is, all ſenſations, either outward or inward, are ſtrong and vivid: The limits between them are more exactly determined: Nor is it eaſy to fall into any error or miſtake with regard to them. When we entertain, therefore, any ſuſpicion, that a philoſophical term is employed without any meaning or idea (as is but too frequent), we need but enquire, *from what impreſſion is that ſuppoſed idea derived?* And if it be impoſſible to aſſign any, this will ſerve to confirm our ſuſpicion. By bringing ideas into ſo clear a light, we may reaſonably hope to remove all diſpute, which may ariſe, concerning their nature and reality *.

SECTION

* See NOTE [A].

SECTION III.

Of the ASSOCIATION of IDEAS.

IT is evident, that there is a principle of connexion between the different thoughts or ideas of the mind, and that, in their appearance to the memory or imagination, they introduce each other with a certain degree of method and regularity. In our more ſerious thinking or diſcourſe, this is ſo obſervable, that any particular thought, which breaks in upon the regular tract or chain of ideas, is immediately remarked and rejected. And even in our wildeſt and moſt wandering reveries, nay in our very dreams, we ſhall find, if we reflect, that the imagination ran not altogether at adventures, but that there was ſtill a connexion upheld among the different ideas, which ſucceeded each other. Were the looſeſt and freeſt converſation to be tranſcribed, there would immediately be obſerved ſomething, which connected it in all its tranſitions. Or where this is wanting, the perſon, who broke the thread of diſcourſe, might ſtill inform you, that there had ſecretly revolved in his mind a ſucceſſion of thought, which had gradually led him from the ſubject of converſation,

conversation. Among different languages, even where we cannot suspect the least connexion or communication, it is found, that the words, expressive of ideas, the most compounded, do yet nearly correspond to each other: A certain proof, that the simple ideas, comprehended in the compound ones, were bound together by some universal principle, which, had an equal influence on all mankind.

Though it be too obvious to escape observation, that different ideas are connected together; I do not find, that any philosopher has attempted to enumerate or class all the principles of association; a subject, however, that seems worthy of curiosity. To me, there appear to be only three principles of connexion among ideas, namely, *Resemblance*, *Contiguity* in time or place, and *Cause* or *Effect*.

That these principles serve to connect ideas will not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally leads our thoughts to the original *: The mention of one apartment in a building naturally introduces an enquiry or discourse concerning the others †:. And if we think of a wound, we can scarcely forbear reflecting on the pain which follows it ‡. But that this enumeration is compleat, and that there are no other principles of association, except these, may be difficult to prove to the satisfaction of the reader, or even to a man's own satisfaction. All we can do, in such cases, is to run over several instances, and examine carefully the principle, which binds the different thoughts to each other, never stopping till we render the principle as general as possible §. The more

* Resemblance. † Contiguity. ‡ Cause and Effect.

§ For instance, Contrast or Contrariety is also a connexion among Ideas: But it may, perhaps, be considered as a mixture of *Causation* and *Resemblance*. Where two objects are contrary,

more inſtances we examine, and the more care we employ, the more aſſurance ſhall we acquire, that the enumeration, which we form from the whole, is compleat and entire.

ry, the one deſtroys the other; that is, the cauſe of its annihilation, and the idea of the annihilation of an object, implies the idea of its former exiſtence.

SECTION IV.

SCEPTICAL DOUBTS concerning the OPERATIONS of the UNDERSTANDING.

PART I.

ALL the objects of human reaſon or enquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, *Relations of Ideas*, and *Matters of Fact*. Of the firſt kind are the ſciences of Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic; and in ſhort, every affirmation, which is either intuitively or demonſtratively certain. *That the ſquare of the hypothenuſe is equal to the ſquare of the two ſides*, is a propoſition, which expreſſes a relation between theſe figures. *That three times five is equal to the half of thirty*, expreſſes a relation between theſe numbers. Propoſitions of this kind are diſcoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependence on what is any where exiſtent in the univerſe. Though there never were a circle or triangle in nature, the truths, demonſtrated by Euclid, would for ever retain their certainty and evidence.

Matters of fact, which are the ſecond objects of human reaſon, are not aſcertained in the ſame manner; nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing.

ing. The contrary of every matter of fact is ſtill poſſible; becauſe it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by the mind with the ſame facility and diſtinctneſs, as if ever ſo conformable to reality. *That the ſun will not riſe to-morrow* is no leſs intelligible a propoſition, and implies no more contradiction, than the affirmation, *that it will riſe.* We ſhould in vain, therefore, attempt to demonſtrate its falſehood. Were it demonſtratively falſe, it would imply a contradiction, and could never be diſtinctly conceived by the mind.

It may, therefore, be a ſubject worthy of curioſity, to enquire what is the nature of that evidence, which aſſures us of any real exiſtence and matter of fact, beyond the preſent teſtimony of our ſenſes, or the records of our memory. This part of philoſophy, it is obſervable, has been little cultivated, either by the ancients or moderns; and therefore our doubts and errors, in the proſecution of ſo important an enquiry, may be the more excuſable; while we march through ſuch difficult paths, without any guide or direction. They may even prove uſeful, by exciting curioſity, and deſtroying that implicit faith and ſecurity, which is the bane of all reaſoning and free enquiry. The diſcovery of defects in the common philoſophy, if any ſuch there be, will not, I preſume, be a diſcouragement, but rather an incitement, as is uſual, to attempt ſomething more full and ſatisfactory, than has yet been propoſed to the public.

All reaſonings concerning matter of fact ſeem to be founded on the relation of *Cauſe and Effect.* By means of that relation alone we can go beyond the evidence of our memory and ſenſes. If you were to aſk a man, why he believes any matter of fact, which is abſent; for inſtance, that

that his friend is in the country, or in France; he would give you a reaſon; and this reaſon would be ſome other fact; as a letter received from him, or the knowledge of his former reſolutions and promiſes. A man, finding a watch or any other machine in a deſart iſland, would conclude, that there had once been men in that iſland. All our reaſonings concerning fact are of the ſame nature. And here it is conſtantly ſuppoſed, that there is a connexion between the preſent fact and that which is inferred from it. Were there nothing to bind them together, the inference would be entirely precarious. The hearing of an articulate voice and rational diſcourſe in the dark aſſures us of the preſence of ſome perſon: Why? becauſe theſe are the effects of the human make and fabric, are cloſely connected with it. If we anatomize all the other reaſonings of this nature, we ſhall find, that they are founded on the relation of cauſe and effect, and that this relation is either near or remote, direct or collateral. Heat and light are collateral effects of fire, and the one effect may juſtly be inferred from the other.

If we would ſatisfy ourſelves, therefore, concerning the nature of that evidence, which aſſures us of matters of fact, we muſt enquire how we arrive at the knowledge of cauſe and effect.

I ſhall venture to affirm, as a general propoſition, which admits of no exception, that the knowledge of this relation is not, in any inſtance, attained by reaſonings *à priori*; but ariſes entirely from experience, when we find, that any particular objects are conſtantly conjoined with each other. Let an object be preſented to a man of ever ſo ſtrong natural reaſon and abilities; if that object be entirely new to him, he will not be able, by the moſt accurate examination of its ſenſible qualities, to diſcover any of its cauſes or effects.

fects. Adam, though his rational faculties be ſuppoſed, at the very firſt, entirely perfect, could not have inferred from the fluidity, and tranſparency of water, that it would ſuffocate him, or from the light and warmth of fire, that it would conſume him. No object ever diſcovers, by the qualities which appear to the ſenſes, either the cauſes which produced it, or the effects which will ariſe from it; nor can our reaſon, unaſſiſted by experience, ever draw any inference concerning real exiſtence and matter of fact.

This propoſition, *that cauſes and effects are diſcoverable, not by reaſon, but by experience*, will readily be admitted with regard to ſuch objects, as we remember to have once been altogether unknown to us; ſince we muſt be conſcious of the utter inability, which we then lay under, of foretelling, what would ariſe from them. Preſent two ſmooth pieces of marble to a man, who has no tincture of natural philoſophy; he will never diſcover, that they will adhere together, in ſuch a manner as to require great force to ſeparate them in a direct line, while they make ſo ſmall a reſiſtance to a lateral preſſure. Such events, as bear little analogy to the common courſe of nature, are alſo readily confeſſed to be known only by experience; nor does any man imagine that the exploſion of gunpowder, or the attraction of a loadſtone, could ever be diſcovered by arguments *à priori*. In like manner, when an effect is ſuppoſed to depend upon an intricate machinery or ſecret ſtructure of parts, we make no difficulty in attributing all our knowledge of it to experience. Who will aſſert, that he can give the ultimate reaſon, why milk or bread is proper nouriſhment for a man, not for a lion or a tyger?

But the ſame truth may not appear, at firſt ſight, to have the ſame evidence with regard to events, which have become familiar to us from our firſt appearance in the world, which bear a cloſe analogy to the whole courſe of nature, and which are ſuppoſed to depend on the ſimple qualities of objects, without any ſecret ſtructure of parts. We are apt to imagine, that we could diſcover theſe effects by the mere operation of our reaſon, without experience. We fancy, that were we brought, on a ſudden, into this world, we could at firſt have inferred, that one Billiard-ball would communicate motion to another upon impulſe; and that we needed not to have waited for the event, in order to pronounce with certainty concerning it. Such is the influence of cuſtom, that, where it is ſtrongeſt, it not only covers our natural ignorance, but even conceals itſelf, and ſeems not to take place, merely becauſe it is found in the higheſt degree.

But to convince us, that all the laws of nature, and all the operations of bodies without exception, are known only by experience, the following reflections may, perhaps, ſuffice. Were any object preſented to us, and were we required to pronounce concerning the effect, which will reſult from it, without conſulting paſt obſervation; after what manner, I beſeech you, muſt the mind proceed in this operation? It muſt invent or imagine ſome event, which it aſcribes to the object as its effect; and it is plain that this invention muſt be entirely arbitrary. The mind can never poſſibly find the effect in the ſuppoſed cauſe, by the moſt accurate ſcrutiny and examination. For the effect is totally different from the cauſe, and conſequently can never be diſcovered in it. Motion in the ſecond Billiard-ball is a quite diſtinct event from motion in the

firſt;

first; nor is there any thing in the one to suggest the smallest hint of the other. A stone or piece of metal raised into the air, and left without any support, immediately falls: But to consider the matter *à priori*, is there any thing we discover in this situation, which can beget the idea of a downward, rather than an upward, or any other motion, in the stone or metal?

And as the first imagination or invention of a particular effect, in all natural operations, is arbitrary, where we consult not experience; so must we also esteem the supposed tye or connexion between the cause and effect, which binds them together, and renders it impossible, that any other effect could result from the operation of that cause. When I see, for instance, a Billiard-ball moving in a straight line towards another; even suppose motion in the second ball should by accident be suggested to me, as the result of their contact or impulse; may I not conceive, that a hundred different events might as well follow from that cause? May not both these balls remain at absolute rest? May not the first ball return in a straight line, or leap off from the second in any line or direction? All these suppositions are consistent and conceivable. Why then should we give the preference to one, which is no more consistent or conceivable than the rest? All our reasoning *à priori* will never be able to shew us any foundation for this preference.

In a word, then, every effect is a distinct event from its cause. It could not, therefore, be discovered in the cause, and the first invention or conception of it, *à priori*, must be entirely arbitrary. And even after it is suggested, the conjunction of it with the cause must appear equally arbitrary; since there are always many other effects, which, to reason, must seem fully as consistent and natural.

ral.

ral. In vain, therefore, ſhould we pretend to determine any ſingle event, or infer any cauſe or effect, without the aſſiſtance of obſervation and experience.

Hence we may diſcover the reaſon, why no philoſopher, who is rational and modeſt, has ever pretended to aſſign the ultimate cauſe of any natural operation, or to ſhow diſtinctly the action of that power, which produces any ſingle effect in the univerſe. It is confeſſed, that the utmoſt effort of human reaſon is, to reduce the principles, productive of natural phænomena, to a greater ſimplicity, and to reſolve the many particular effects into a few general cauſes, by means of reaſonings from analogy, experience, and obſervation. But as to the cauſes of theſe general effects, we ſhould in vain attempt their diſcovery; nor ſhall we ever be able to ſatisfy ourſelves, by any particular explication of them. Theſe ultimate ſprings and principles are totally ſhut up from human curioſity and enquiry. Elaſticity, gravity, coheſion of parts, communication of motion by impulſe; theſe are probably the ultimate cauſes and principles which we ſhall ever diſcover in nature; and we may eſteem ourſelves ſufficiently happy, if, by accurate enquiry and reaſoning, we can trace up the particular phænomena to, or near to, theſe general principles. The moſt perfect philoſophy of the natural kind only ſtaves off our ignorance a little longer: As perhaps the moſt perfect philoſophy of the moral or metaphyſical kind ſerves only to diſcover larger portions of it. Thus the obſervation of human blindneſs and weakneſs is the reſult of all philoſophy, and meets us, at every turn, in ſpite of our endeavours to elude or avoid it.

Nor is geometry, when taken into the aſſiſtance of natural philoſophy, ever able to remedy this

 defect,

defect, or lead us into the knowledge of ultimate causes, by all that accuracy of reasoning, for which it is so justly celebrated. Every part of mixed mathematics proceeds upon the supposition, that certain laws are established by nature in her operations; and abstract reasonings are employed, either to assist experience in the discovery of these laws, or to determine their influence in particular instances, where it depends upon any precise degree of distance and quantity. Thus, it is a law of motion, discovered by experience, that the moment or force of any body in motion is in the compound ratio or proportion of its solid contents and its velocity: and consequently, that a small force may remove the greatest weight, if, by any contrivance or machinery, we can encrease the velocity of that force, so as to make it an overmatch for its antagonist. Geometry assists us in the application of this law, by giving us the just dimensions of all the parts and figures, which can enter into any species of machine; but still the discovery of the law itself is owing merely to experience, and all the abstract reasonings in the world could never lead us one step towards the knowledge of it. When we reason *à priori*, and consider merely any object or cause, as it appears to the mind, independent of all observation, it never could suggest to us the notion of any distinct object, such as its effect; much less, shew us the inseparable and inviolable connection between them. A man must be very sagacious, who could discover by reasoning, that crystal is the effect of heat, and ice of cold, without being previously acquainted with the operation of these qualities.

PART

PART II.

But we have not, yet, attained any tolerable ſatisfaction with regard to the queſtion firſt propoſed. Each ſolution ſtill gives riſe to a new queſtion as difficult as the foregoing, and leads us on to farther enquiries. When it is aſked, *What is the nature of all our reaſonings concerning matter of fact?* the proper anſwer ſeems to be, that they are founded on the relation of cauſe and effect. When again it is aſked, *What is the foundation of all our reaſonings and concluſions concerning that relation?* it may be replied in one word, Experience. But if we ſtill carry on our ſifting humour, and aſk, *What is the foundation of all concluſions from experience?* this implies a new queſtion, which may be of more difficult ſolution and explication. Philoſophers, that give themſelves airs of ſuperior wiſdom and ſufficiency, have a hard taſk, when they encounter perſons of inquiſitive diſpoſitions, who puſh them from every corner, to which they retreat, and who are ſure at laſt to bring them to ſome dangerous dilemma. The beſt expedient to prevent this confuſion, is to be modeſt in our pretenſions; and even to diſcover the difficulty ourſelves before it is objected to us. By this means, we may make a kind of merit of our very ignorance.

I ſhall content myſelf, in this ſection, with an eaſy taſk, and ſhall pretend only to give a negative anſwer to the queſtion here propoſed. I ſay then, that, even after we have experience of the operations of cauſe and effect, our concluſions from that experience are *not* founded on reaſoning, or any proceſs of the underſtanding. This anſwer we muſt endeavour, both to explain and to defend.

It muſt certainly be allowed, that nature has kept us at a great diſtance from all her ſecrets, and has afforded us only the knowledge of a few ſuperficial qualities of objects; while ſhe conceals from us thoſe powers and principles, on which the influence of theſe objects entirely depends. Our ſenſes inform us of the colour, weight, and conſiſtence of bread; but neither ſenſe nor reaſon can ever inform us of thoſe qualities, which fit it for the nouriſhment and ſupport of a human body. Sight or feeling conveys an idea of the actual motion of bodies; but as to that wonderful force or power, which would carry on a moving body for ever in a continued change of place, and which bodies never loſe but by communicating it to others; of this we cannot form the moſt diſtant conception. But notwithſtanding this ignorance of natural powers * and principles, we always preſume, when we ſee like ſenſible qualities, that they have like ſecret powers, and expect, that effects, ſimilar to thoſe which we have experienced, will follow from them. If a body of like colour and conſiſtence with that bread, which we have formerly eat, be preſented to us, we make no ſcruple of repeating the experiment, and foreſee, with certainty, like nouriſhment and ſupport. Now this is a proceſs of the mind or thought, of which I would willingly know the foundation. It is allowed on all hands, that there is no known connexion between the ſenſible qualities and the ſecret powers; and conſequently, that the mind is not led to form ſuch a concluſion concerning their conſtant and regular conjunction, by any thing which it knows of their nature. As to paſt *Experience*, it can be allowed to give *direct* and *certain*

* The word, Power, is here uſed in a looſe and popular ſenſe. The more accurate explication of it would give additional evidence to this argument. See Sect. 7.

tain information of thoſe preciſe objects only, and that preciſe period of time, which fell under its cognizance: But why this experience ſhould be extended to future times, and to other objects, which for aught we know, may be only in appearance ſimilar; this is the main queſtion on which I would inſiſt. The bread, which I formerly eat, nouriſhed me; that is, a body of ſuch ſenſible qualities was, at that time, endued with ſecret powers: But does it follow, that other bread muſt alſo nouriſh me at another time, and that like ſenſible qualities muſt always be attended with like ſecret powers? The conſequence ſeems no wiſe neceſſary. At leaſt, it muſt be acknowledged, that there is here a conſequence drawn by the mind; that there is a certain ſtep taken; a proceſs of thought, and an inference, which wants to be explained. Theſe two propoſitions are far from being the ſame, *I have found that ſuch an object has always been attended with ſuch an effect*, and *I foreſee, that other objects, which are, in appearance, ſimilar, will be attended with ſimilar effects.* I ſhall allow, if you pleaſe, that the one propoſition may juſtly be inferred from the other: I know in fact, that it always is inferred. But if you inſiſt, that the inference is made by a chain of reaſoning, I deſire you to produce that reaſoning. The connexion between theſe propoſitions is not intuitive. There is required a medium, which may enable the mind to draw ſuch an inference, if indeed it be drawn by reaſoning and argument. What that medium is, I muſt confeſs, paſſes my apprehenſion; and it is incumbent on thoſe to produce it, who aſſert, that it really exiſts, and is the origin of all our concluſions concerning matter of fact.

This negative argument muſt certainly, in proceſs of time, become altogether convincing, if many penetrating and able philoſophers ſhall turn their enquiries this way; and no one be ever able to

to difcover any connecting propofition or intermediate ftep, which fupports the underftanding in this conclufion. But as the queftion is yet new, every reader may not truft fo far to his own penetration, as to conclude, becaufe an argument efcapes his enquiry, that therefore it does not really exift. For this reafon it may be requifite to venture upon a more difficult tafk; and enumerating all the branches of human knowledge, endeavour to fhew, that none of them can afford fuch an argument.

All reafonings may be divided into two kinds, namely demonftrative reafoning, or that concerning relations of ideas, and moral reafoning, or that concerning matter of fact and exiftence. That there are no demonftrative arguments in the cafe, feems evident; fince it implies no contradiction, that the courfe of nature may change, and that an object, feemingly like thofe which we have experienced, may be attended with different or contrary effects. May I not clearly and diftinctly conceive, that a body, falling from the clouds, and which, in all other refpects, refembles fnow, has yet the tafte of falt or feeling of fire? Is there any more intelligible propofition than to affirm, that all the trees will flourifh in December and January, and decay in May and June? Now whatever is intelligible, and can be diftinctly conceived, implies no contradiction, and can never be proved falfe by any demonftrative argument or abftract reafoning *à priori*.

If we be, therefore, engaged by arguments to put truft in paft experience, and make it the ftandard of our future judgment, thefe arguments muft be probable only, or fuch as regard matter of fact and real exiftence, according to the divifion above mentioned. But that there is no argument of this kind, muft appear, if our explication of that fpecies of reafoning be admitted as folid and

and ſatisfactory. We have ſaid, that all arguments concerning exiſtence are founded on the relation of cauſe and effect; that our knowledge of that relation is derived entirely from experience; and that all our experimental concluſions proceed upon the ſuppoſition, that the future will be conformable to the paſt. To endeavour, therefore, the proof of this laſt ſuppoſition by probable arguments, or arguments regarding exiſtence, muſt be evidently going in a circle, and taking that for granted, which is the very point in queſtion.

In reality, all arguments from experience are founded on the ſimilarity, which we diſcover among natural objects, and by which we are induced to expect effects ſimilar to thoſe, which we have found to follow from ſuch objects. And though none but a fool or madman will ever pretend to diſpute the authority of experience, or to reject that great guide of human life; it may ſurely be allowed a philoſopher to have ſo much curioſity at leaſt, as to examine the principle of human nature, which gives this mighty authority to experience, and makes us draw advantage from that ſimilarity, which nature has placed among different objects. From cauſes, which appear *ſimilar*, we expect ſimilar effects. This is the ſum of all our experimental concluſions. Now it ſeems evident, that, if this concluſion were formed by reaſon, it would be as perfect at firſt, and upon one inſtance, as after ever ſo long a courſe of experience. But the caſe is far otherwiſe. Nothing ſo like as eggs; yet no one, on account of this appearing ſimilarity, expects the ſame taſte and reliſh in all of them. It is only after a long courſe of uniform experiments in any kind, that we attain a firm reliance and ſecurity with regard to a particular event. Now where is that proceſs of reaſoning, which, from one inſtance, draws a concluſion, ſo different from that which it

it infers from a hundred inſtances, that are nowiſe different from that ſingle one? This queſtion I propoſe as much for the ſake of information, as with an intention of raiſing difficulties. I cannot find, I cannot imagine any ſuch reaſoning. But I keep my mind ſtill open to inſtruction, if any one will vouchſafe to beſtow it on me.

Should it be ſaid, that, from a number of uniform experiments, we *infer* a connexion between the ſenſible qualities and the ſecret powers; this, I muſt confeſs, ſeems the ſame difficulty, couched in different terms. The queſtion ſtill recurs, on what proceſs of argument this *inference* is founded? Where is the medium, the interpoſing ideas, which join propoſitions ſo very wide of each other? It is confeſſed, that the colour, conſiſtence, and other ſenſible qualities of bread appear not, of themſelves, to have any connexion with the ſecret powers of nouriſhment and ſupport. For otherwiſe we could infer theſe ſecret powers from the firſt appearance of theſe ſenſible qualities, without the aid of experience; contrary to the ſentiment of all philoſophers, and contrary to plain matter of fact. Here then is our natural ſtate of ignorance with regard to the powers and influence of all objects. How is this remedied by experience? It only ſhews us a number of uniform effects, reſulting from certain objects, and teaches us, that thoſe particular objects, at that particular time, were endowed with ſuch powers and forces. When a new object endowed with ſimilar ſenſible qualities, is produced, we expect ſimilar powers and forces, and look for a like effect. From a body of like colour and conſiſtence with bread, we expect like nouriſhment and ſupport. But this ſurely is a ſtep or progreſs of the mind, which wants to be explained. When a man ſays, *I have found,*

in all paſt inſtances, ſuch ſenſible qualities conjoined with ſuch ſecret powers: And then he ſays, *ſimilar ſenſible qualities will always be conjoined with ſimilar ſecret powers*; he is not guilty of a tautology, nor are theſe propoſitions in any reſpect the ſame. You ſay that the one propoſition is an inference from the other. But you muſt confeſs that the inference is not intuitive; neither is it demonſtrative: Of what nature is it then? To ſay it is experimental, is begging the queſtion. For all inferences from experience ſuppoſe, as their foundation, that the future will reſemble the paſt, and that ſimilar powers will be conjoined with ſimilar ſenſible qualities. If there be any ſuſpicion, that the courſe of nature may change, and that the paſt may be no rule for the future, all experience becomes uſeleſs, and can give riſe to no inference or concluſion. It is impoſſible, therefore, that any arguments from experience can prove this reſemblance. Let the courſe of things be allowed hitherto ever ſo regular; that alone, without ſome new argument or inference, proves not, that, for the future, it will continue ſo. In vain do you pretend to have learned the nature of bodies from your paſt experience. Their ſecret nature, and conſequently all their effects and influence, may change, without any change in their ſenſible qualities. This happens ſometimes, and with regard to ſome objects: Why may it not happen always, and with regard to all objects? What logic, what proceſs of argument ſecures you againſt this ſuppoſition? My practice, you ſay, refutes my doubt. But you miſtake the purport of my queſtion. As an agent, I am quite ſatisfied in the point; but as a philoſopher, who has ſome ſhare of curioſity, I will not ſay ſcepticiſm, I want to learn the foundation of this inference. No reading, no enquiry has yet been able to remove my difficulty, or give me ſatisfaction in a matter of ſuch importance.

tance. Can I do better than propose the difficulty to the public, even though, perhaps, I have small hopes of obtaining a solution? We shall at least, by this means, be sensible of our ignorance, if we do not augment our knowledge.

I must confess, that a man is guilty of unpardonable arrogance, who concludes, because an argument has escaped his own investigation, that therefore it does not really exist. I must also confess, that though all the learned, for several ages, should have employed themselves in fruitless search upon any subject, it may still, perhaps, be rash to conclude positively, that the subject must, therefore, pass all human conprehension. Even though we examine all the sources of our knowledge, and conclude them unfit for such a subject, there may still remain a suspicion, that the enumeration is not compleat, or the examination not accurate. But with regard to the present subject, there are some considerations, which seem to remove all this accusation of arrogance or suspicion of mistake.

It is certain, that the most ignorant and stupid peasants, nay infants, nay even brute beasts, improve by experience, and learn the qualities of natural objects, by observing the effects, which result from them. When a child has felt the sensation of pain from touching the flame of a candle, he will be careful not to put his hand near any candle; but will expect a similar effect from a cause, which is similar in its sensible qualities and appearance. If you assert, therefore, that the understanding of the child is led into this conclusion by any process of argument or ratiocination, I may justly require you to produce that argument; nor have you any pretence to refuse so equitable a demand. You cannot say, that the argument is abstruse, and may possible escape your enquiry; since you confess, that it is obvious

obvious to the capacity of a mere infant. If you hesitate, therefore, a moment, or if, after reflection, you produce any intricate or profound argument, you, in a manner, give up the question, and confess, that it is not reasoning which engages us to suppose the past resembling the future, and to expect similar effects from causes, which are, to appearance, similar. This is the proposition which I intended to enforce in the present section. If I be right, I pretend not to have made any mighty discovery. And if I be wrong, I must acknowledge myself to be indeed a very backward scholar; since I cannot now discover an argument, which, it seems, was perfectly familiar to me, long before I was out of my cradle.

SECTION V.

Sceptical Solution of these Doubts.

PART I.

THE paſſion for philoſophy, like that for religion, ſeems liable to this inconvenience, that, though it aims at the correction of our manners, and extirpation of our vices, it may only ſerve, by imprudent management, to foſter a predominant inclination, and puſh the mind, with more determined reſolution, towards that ſide, which already *draws* too much, by the biaſs and propenſity of the natural temper. It is certain, that, while we aſpire to the magnanimous firmneſs of the philoſophic ſage, and endeavour to confine our pleaſures altogether within our own minds, we may, at laſt, render our philoſophy like that of Epictetus, and other *Stoics*, only a more refined ſyſtem of ſelfiſhneſs, and reaſon ourſelves out of all virtue, as well as ſocial enjoyment. While we ſtudy with attention the vanity of human life, and turn all our thoughts towards the empty and tranſitory nature of riches and honours, we are, perhaps, all the while, flattering our natural indolence, which, hating the buſtle of the world, and drudgery of buſineſs, ſeeks a pretence of reaſon, to give itſelf

a full

a full and uncontrouled indulgence. There is, however, one ſpecies of philoſophy, which ſeems little liable to this inconvenience, and that becauſe it ſtrikes in with no diſorderly paſſion of the human mind, nor can mingle itſelf with any natural affection or propenſity; and that is the Academic or Sceptical philoſophy. The academics always talk of doubt and ſuſpenſe of judgment, of danger in haſty determinations, of confining to very narrow bounds the enquiries of the underſtanding, and of renouncing all ſpeculations which lie not within the limits of common life and practice. Nothing, therefore, can be more contrary than ſuch a philoſophy to the ſupine indolence of the mind, its raſh arrogance, its lofty pretenſions, and its ſuperſtitious credulity. Every paſſion is mortified by it, except the love of truth; and that paſſion never is, nor can be carried to too high a degree. It is ſurpriſing, therefore, that this philoſophy, which, in almoſt every inſtance, muſt be harmleſs and innocent, ſhould be the ſubject of ſo much groundleſs reproach and obloquy. But, perhaps, the very circumſtance, which renders it ſo innocent, is what chiefly expoſes it to the public hatred and reſentment. By flattering no irregular paſſion, it gains few partizans: By oppoſing ſo many vices and follies, it raiſes to itſelf abundance of enemies, who ſtigmatize it as libertine, profane, and irreligious.

Nor need we fear, that this philoſophy, while it endeavours to limit our enquiries to common life, ſhould ever undermine the reaſonings of common life, and carry its doubts ſo far as to deſtroy all action, as well as ſpeculation. Nature will always maintain her rights, and prevail in the end over any abſtract reaſoning whatſoever. Though we ſhould conclude, for inſtance, as in the foregoing ſection, that, in all reaſonings from experience, there is a ſtep taken by the mind, which is not ſup-

ſupported by any argument or proceſs of the underſtanding; there is no danger, that theſe reaſonings, on which almoſt all knowledge depends, will ever be affected by ſuch a diſcovery. If the mind be not engaged by argument to make this ſtep, it muſt be induced by ſome other principle of equal weight and authority; and that principle will preſerve its influence as long as human nature remains the ſame. What the principle is, may well be worth the pains of enquiry.

Suppoſe a perſon, though endowed with the ſtrongeſt faculties of reaſon and reflection, to be brought on a ſudden into this world; he would, indeed, immediately, obſerve a a continual ſucceſſion of objects, and one event follow another; but he would not be able to diſcover any thing farther. He would not, at firſt, by any reaſoning, be able to reach the idea of cauſe and effect; ſince the particular powers, by which all natural operations are performed, never appear to the ſenſes; nor is it reaſonable to conclude, merely becauſe one event, in one inſtance, precedes another, that therefore the one is the cauſe, the other the effect. Their conjunction may be arbitrary and caſual. There may be no reaſon to infer the exiſtence of one from the appearance of the other. And in a word, ſuch a perſon, without more experience, could never employ his conjecture or reaſoning concerning any matter of fact, or be aſſured of any thing beyond what was immediately preſent to his memory and ſenſes.

Suppoſe again, that he has acquired more experience, and has lived ſo long in the world as to have obſerved ſimilar objects or events to be conſtantly conjoined together; what is the conſequence of this experience? He immediately infers the exiſtence of one object from the appearance of the other. Yet he has not, by all his experience, acquired any idea or knowledge of the

the ſecret power, by which the object produces the other; nor is it, by any proceſs of reaſoning, he is engaged to draw this inference. But ſtill he finds himſelf determined to draw it: And though he ſhould be convinced, that his underſtanding has no part in the operation, he would nevertheleſs continue in the ſame courſe of thinking. There is ſome other principle, which determines him to form ſuch a concluſion.

This principle is Cuſtom or Habit. For wherever the repetition of any particular act or operation, without being impelled by any reaſoning or proceſs of the underſtanding; we always ſay, that this propenſity is the effect of *Cuſtom*. By employing that word, we pretend not to have given the ultimate reaſon of ſuch a propenſity. We only point out a principle of human nature, which is univerſally acknowledged, and which is well known by its effects. Perhaps, we can puſh our enquiries no farther, or pretend to give the cauſe of this cauſe; but muſt reſt contented with it as the ultimate principle, which we can aſſign, of all our concluſions from experience. It is ſufficient ſatisfaction, that we can go ſo far; without repining at the narrowneſs of our faculties, becauſe they will carry us no farther. And it is certain we here advance a very intelligible propoſition at leaſt, if not a true one, when we aſſert, that, after the conſtant conjunction of two objects, heat and flame, for inſtance, weight and ſolidity, we are determined by cuſtom alone to expect the one from the appearance of the other. This hypotheſis ſeems even the only one, which explains the difficulty, why we draw, from a thouſand inſtances, an inference, which we are not able to draw from one inſtance, that is, in no reſpect, different from them. Reaſon is incapable of any ſuch variation. The concluſions, which it draws from conſidering one circle, are the

the ſame which it would form upon ſurveying all the circles in the univerſe. But no man, having ſeen only one body move after being impelled by another, could infer, that every other body will move after a like impulſe. All inferences from experience, therefore, are effects of cuſtom, not of reaſoning *.

Cuſtom, then, is the great guide of human life. It is that principle alone, which renders our experience uſeful to us, and makes us expect, for the future, a ſimilar train of events with thoſe which have appeared in the paſt. Without the influence of cuſtom, we ſhould be entirely ignorant of every matter of fact, beyond what is immediately preſent to the memory and ſenſes. We ſhould never know how to adjuſt means to ends, or to employ our natural powers in the production of any effect. There would be an end at once of all action, as well as of the chief part of ſpeculation.

But here it may be proper to remark, that though our concluſions from experience carry us beyond our memory and ſenſes, and aſſure us of matters of fact, which happened in the moſt diſtant places and moſt remote ages; yet ſome fact muſt always be preſent to the ſenſes or memory, from whence we may firſt proceed in drawing theſe concluſions. A man, who ſhould find in a deſert country the remains of pompous buildings, would conclude, that the country had, in ancient times, been cultivated by civilized inhabitants; but did nothing of this nature occur to him, he could never form ſuch an inference. We learn the events of former ages from hiſtory; but then we muſt peruſe the volumes, in which this inſtruction is contained, and thence carry up our inferences from one teſtimony to another,

* See NOTE [B].

another, till we arrive at the eye-witneſſes and ſpectators of theſe diſtant events. In a word, if we proceed not upon ſome fact, preſent to the memory or ſenſes, our reaſonings would be merely hypothetical; and however the particular links might be connected with each other, the whole chain of inferences would have nothing to ſupport it, nor could we ever, by its means, arrive at the knowledge of any real exiſtence. If I aſk, why you believe any particular matter of fact, which you relate, you muſt tell me ſome reaſon; and this reaſon will be ſome other fact, connected with it. But as you cannot proceed after this manner, *in infinitum*, you muſt at laſt terminate in ſome fact, which is preſent to your memory or ſenſes; or muſt allow that your belief is entirely without foundation.

What then is the concluſion of the whole matter; A ſimple one; though, it muſt be confeſſed, pretty remote from the common theories of philoſophy. All belief of matter of fact or real exiſtence is derived merely from ſome object, preſent to the memory or ſenſes, and a cuſtomary conjunction between that and ſome other object. Or in other words; having found, in many inſtances, that any two kinds of objects, flame and heat, ſnow and cold, have always been conjoined together; if flame or ſnow be preſented anew to the ſenſes, the mind is carried by cuſtom to expect heat or cold, and to *believe*, that ſuch a quality does exiſt, and will diſcover itſelf upon a nearer approach. This belief is the neceſſary reſult of placing the mind in ſuch circumſtances. It is an operation of the ſoul, when we are ſo ſituated, as unavoidable as to feel the paſſion of love, when we receive benefits; or hatred, when we meet with injuries. All theſe operations are a ſpecies of natural inſtincts, which no reaſoning or proceſs of the thought

and underſtanding is able, either to produce, or to prevent.

At this point, it would be very allowable for us to ſtop our philoſophical reſearches. In moſt queſtions, we can never make a ſingle ſtep farther; and in all queſtions, we muſt terminate here at laſt, after our moſt reſtleſs and curious enquiries. But ſtill our curioſity will be pardonable, perhaps commendable, if it carry us on to ſtill farther reſearches, and make us examine more accurately the nature of this *belief*, and of the *cuſtomary conjunction*, whence it is derived. By this means we may meet with ſome explications and analogies, that will give ſatisfaction; at leaſt to ſuch as love the abſtract ſciences, and can be entertained with ſpeculations, which, however accurate, may ſtill retain a degree of doubt and uncertainty. As to readers of a different taſte; the remaining part of this ſection is not calculated for them, and the following enquiries may well be underſtood, though it be neglected.

P A R T II.

Nothing is more free than the imagination of man; and though it cannot exceed that original ſtock of ideas, furniſhed by the internal and external ſenſes, it has unlimited power of mixing, compounding, ſeparating, and dividing theſe ideas, in all the varieties of fiction and viſion. It can feign a train of events, with all the appearance of reality, aſcribe to them a particular time and place, conceive them as exiſtent, and paint them out to itſelf with every circumſtance, that belongs to any hiſtorical fact, which it believes with the greateſt certainty. Wherein, therefore, conſiſts the difference between ſuch a fiction and belief? It lies not merely in any peculiar idea, which is annexed to ſuch a conception as commands our aſſent, and which

which is wanting to every known fiction. For as the mind has authority over all its ideas, it could voluntarily annex this particular idea to any fiction, and consequently be able to believe whatever it pleases; contrary to what we find by daily experience. We can, in our conception, join the head of a man to the body of a horse; but it is not in our power to believe, that such an animal has ever really existed.

It follows, therefore, that the difference between *fiction* and *belief* lies in some sentiment or feeling, which is annexed to the latter, not to the former, and which depends not on the will, nor can be commanded at pleasure. It must be excited by nature, like all other sentiments; and must arise from the particular situation, in which the mind is placed at any particular juncture. Whenever any object is presented to the memory or senses, it immediately, by the force of custom, carries the imagination to conceive that object, which is usually conjoined to it; and this conception is attended with a feeling or sentiment, different from the loose reveries of the fancy. In this consists the whole nature of belief. For as there is no matter of fact which we believe so firmly, that we cannot conceive the contrary, there would be no difference between the conception assented to, and that which is rejected, were it not for some sentiment, which distinguishes the one from the other. If I see a billiard-ball moving towards another, on a smooth table, I can easily conceive it to stop upon contact. This conception implies no contradiction; but still it feels very differently from that conception, by which I represent to myself the impulse, and the communication of motion from one ball to another.

Were we to attempt a *definition* of this sentiment, we should, perhaps, find it very difficult, if not an impossible task; in the same manner as if we should endeavour to define the feeling of cold or passion of

anger, to a creature who never had any experience of these sentiments. Belief is the true and proper name of this feeling; and no one is ever at a loss to know the meaning of that term; because every man is every moment conscious of the sentiment represented by it. It may not, however, be improper to attempt a *description* of this sentiment; in hopes we may, by that means, arrive at some analogies, which may afford a more perfect explication of it. I say then, that belief is nothing but a more vivid, lively, forcible, firm, steady conception of an object, than what the imagination alone is ever able to attain. This variety of terms, which may seem so unphilosophical, is intended only to express that act of the mind, which renders realities, or what is taken for such, more present to us than fictions, causes them to weigh more in the thought, and gives them a superior influence on the passions and imagination. Provided we agree about the thing, it is needless to dispute about the terms. The imagination has the command over all its ideas, and can join and mix and vary them, in all the ways possible. It may conceive fictitious objects with all the circumstances of place and time. It may set them, in a manner, before our eyes, in their true colours, just as they might have existed. But as it is impossible, that this faculty of imagination can ever, of itself, reach belief, it is evident, that belief consists not in the peculiar nature or order of ideas, but in the *manner* of their conception, and in their *feeling* to the mind. I confess, that it is impossible perfectly to explain this feeling or manner of conception. We may make use of words, which express something near it. But its true and proper name, as we observed before, is *belief*; which is a term, that every one sufficiently understands in common life. And in philosophy, we can go no farther than assert, that *belief* is something felt by the mind, which distinguishes the ideas of the judgment

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ment from the fictions of the imagination. It gives them more weight and influence; makes them appear of greater importance; inforces them in the mind; and renders them the governing principle of our actions. I hear at present, for instance, a person's voice, with whom I am acquainted; and the sound comes as from the next room. This impression of my senses immediately conveys my thought to the person, together with all the surrounding objects, I paint them out to myself as existing at present, with the same qualities and relations, of which I formerly knew them possessed. These ideas take faster hold of my mind, than ideas of an enchanted castle. They are very different to the feeling, and have a much greater influence of every kind, either to give pleasure or pain, joy or sorrow.

Let us, then, take in the whole compass of this doctrine, and allow, that the sentiment of belief is nothing but a conception more intense and steady than what attends the mere fictions of the imagination, and that this *manner* of conception arises from a customary conjunction of the object with something present to the memory or senses: I believe that it will not be difficult, upon these suppositions, to find other operations of the mind analogous to it, and to trace up these phænomena to principles still more general.

We have already observed, that nature has established connexions among particular ideas, and that no sooner one idea occurs to our thoughts than it introduces its correlative, and carries our attention towards it, by a gentle and insensible movement. These principles of connexion or association we have reduced to three, namely, *Resemblance*, *Contiguity*, and *Causation*; which are the only bonds, that unite our thoughts together, and beget that regular train of reflection or discourse, which, in a greater or less degree, takes place among all mankind.

Now

Now here arises a question, on which the solution of the present difficulty will depend. Does it happen, in all these relations, that, when one of the objects is presented to the senses or memory, the mind is not only carried to the conception of the correlative, but reaches a steadier and stronger conception of it than what otherwise it would have been able to attain? This seems to be the case with that belief, which arises from the relation of cause and effect. And if the case be the same with the other relations or principles of association, this may be established as a general law, which takes place in all the operations of the mind.

We may, therefore, observe, as the first experiment to our present purpose, that, upon the appearance of the picture of an absent friend, our idea of him is evidently enlivened by the *resemblance*, and that every passion, which that idea occasions, whether of joy or sorrow, acquires new force and vigour. In producing this effect, there concur both a relation and a present impression. Where the picture bears him no resemblance, at least was not intended for him, it never so much as conveys our thought to him: And where it is absent, as well as the person; though the mind may pass from the thought of the one to that of the other; it feels its idea to be rather weakened than enlivened by that transition. We take a pleasure in viewing the picture of a friend, when it is set before us; but when it is removed, rather chuse to consider him directly, than by reflection in an image, which is equally distant and obscure.

The ceremonies of the Roman Catholic religion may be considered as instances of the same nature. The devotees of that superstition usually plead in excuse for the mummeries, with which they are upbraided, that they feel the good effect of those external motions, and postures, and actions, in enlivening their

their devotion and quickening their fervour, which otherwise would decay, if directed entirely to distant and immaterial objects. We shadow out the objects of our faith, say they, in sensible types and images, and render them more present to us by the immediate presence of these types, than it is possible for us to do, merely by an intellectual view and contemplation. Sensible objects have always a greater influence on the fancy than any other; and this influence they readily convey to those ideas, to which they are related, and which they resemble. I shall only infer from these practices, and this reasoning, that the effect of resemblance in enlivening the ideas is very common; and as in every case a resemblance and a present impression must concur, we are abundantly supplied with experiments to prove the reality of the foregoing principle.

We may add force to these experiments by others of a different kind, in considering the effects of *contiguity* as well as of *resemblance*. It is certain, that distance diminishes the force of every idea, and that, upon our approach to any object; though it does not discover itself to our senses; it operates upon the mind with an influence, which imitates an immediate impression. The thinking on any object readily transports the mind to what is contiguous; but it is only the actual presence of an object, that transports it with a superior vivacity. When I am a few miles from home, whatever relates to it touches me more nearly than when I am two hundred leagues distant; though even at that distance the reflecting on any thing in the neighbourhood of my friends or family naturally produces an idea of them. But as in this latter case, both the objects of the mind are ideas; notwithstanding there is an easy transition between them; that transition alone is not able to give a superior vivacity to any

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of the ideas, for want of some immediate impression *.

No one can doubt but causation has the same influence as the other two relations of resemblance and contiguity. Superstitious people are fond of the reliques of saints and holy men, for the same reason, that they seek after types or images, in order to enliven their devotion, and give them a more intimate and strong conception of those exemplary lives, which they desire to imitate. Now it is evident, that one of the best reliques, which a devotee could procure, would be the handywork of a saint; and if his cloaths and furniture are ever to be considered in this light, it is because they were once at his disposal, and were moved and affected by him; in which respect they are to be considered as imperfect effects, and as connected with him by a shorter chain of consequences than any of those, by which we learn the reality of his existence.

Suppose, that the son of a friend, who had been long dead or absent, were presented to us; it is evident, that this object would instantly revive its correlative idea, and recal to our thoughts all past intimacies and familiarities, in more lively colours than

* "Naturane nobis, inquit, datum dicam, an errore quo-"dam, ut, cum ea loca videamus, in quibus memoria dignos "viros acceperimus multum esse versatos, magis moveamur, "quam siquando eorum ipsorum aut facta audiamus aut scrip-"tum aliquod legamus? Velut ego nunc moveor. Venit "enim mihi PLATONIS in mentem, quem accepimus pri-"mum hîc disputare solitum: Cujus etiam illi hortuli propin-"qui non memoriam solum mihi afferunt, sed ipsum viden-"tur in conspectu meo hîc ponere. Hic SPEUSIPPUS, hic "XENOCRATES, hic ejus auditor POLEMO; cujus ipsa illa "sessio fuit, quam videamus. Equidem etiam curiam nos-"tram HOSTILIAM dico, non hanc novam, quæ mihi minor "esse videtur postquam est major, solebam intuens, SCIPIO-"NEM, CATONEM, LÆLIUM, nostrum vero in primis avum "cogitare. Tanta vis admonitionis est in locis; ut non sine "causa ex his memoriæ deducta sit disciplina." CICERO *de Finibus*. Lib. v.

than they would otherwise have appeared to us. This is another phænomenon, which seems to prove the principle above-mentioned.

We may observe, that, in these phænomena, the belief of the correlative object is always presupposed; without which the relation could have no effect. The influence of the picture supposes, that we *believe* our friend to have once existed. Contiguity to home can never excite our ideas of home, unless we *believe* that it really exists. Now I assert, that this belief, where it reaches beyond the memory or senses, is of a similar nature, and arises from similar causes, with the transition of thought and vivacity of conception here explained. When I throw a piece of dry wood into a fire, my mind is immediately carried to conceive, that it augments, not extinguishes the flame. This transition of thought from the cause to the effect proceeds not from reason. It derives its origin altogether from custom and experience. And as it first begins from an object, present to the senses, it renders the idea or conception of flame more strong and lively than any loose, floating reverie of the imagination. That idea arises immediately. The thought moves instantly towards it, and conveys to it all that force of conception, which is derived from the impression present to the senses. When a sword is levelled at my breast, does not the idea of wound and pain strike me more strongly, than when a glass of wine is presented to me, even though by accident this idea should occur after the appearance of the latter object? But what is there in this whole matter to cause such a strong conception, except only a present object and a customary transition to the idea of another object, which we have been accustomed to conjoin with the former? This is the whole operation of the mind, in all our conclusions concerning matter of fact and existence; and it is a satisfaction to find some analogies, by which it may be explained.

explained. The tranſition from a preſent object does in all caſes give ſtrength and ſolidity to the related idea.

Here, then, is a kind of pre-eſtabliſhed harmony between the courſe of nature and the ſucceſſion of our ideas; and though the powers and forces, by which the former is governed, be wholly unknown to us; yet our thoughts and conceptions have ſtill, we find, gone on in the ſame train with the other works of nature. Cuſtom is that principle, by which this correſpondence has been effected; ſo neceſſary to the ſubſiſtence of our ſpecies, and the regulation of our conduct, in every circumſtance and occurrence of human life. Had not the preſence of an object inſtantly excited the idea of thoſe objects, commonly conjoined with it, all our knowledge muſt have been limited to the narrow ſphere of our memory and ſenſes; and we ſhould never have been able to adjuſt means to ends, or employ our natural powers, either to the producing of good, or avoiding of evil. Thoſe, who delight in the diſcovery and contemplation of *final cauſes*, have here ample ſubject to employ their wonder and admiration.

I ſhall add, for a further confirmation of the foregoing theory, that, as this operation of the mind, by which we infer like effects from like cauſes, and *vice verſa*, is ſo eſſential to the ſubſiſtence of all human creatures, it is not probable, that it could be truſted to the fallacious deductions of our reaſon, which is ſlow in its operations; appears not, in any degree, during the firſt years of infancy; and at beſt is, in every age and period of human life, extremely liable to error and miſtake. It is more conformable to the ordinary wiſdom of nature to ſecure ſo neceſſary an act of the mind, by ſome inſtinct or mechanical tendency, which may be infallible in its operations, may diſcover itſelf at the firſt appearance of life and thought, and may be independent

independent of all the laboured deductions of the understanding. As nature has taught us the use of our limbs, without giving us the knowledge of the muscles and nerves, by which they are actuated; so has she implanted in us an instinct, which carries forward the thought in a correspondent course to that which she has established among external objects; though we are ignorant of those powers and forces, on which this regular course and succession of objects totally depends.

SECTION VI.

Of PROBABILITY*.

THOUGH there be no ſuch thing as *Chance* in the world; our ignorance of the real cauſe of any event has the ſame influence on the underſtanding, and begets a like ſpecies of belief or opinion.

There is certainly a probability, which ariſes from a ſuperiority of chances on any ſide; and according as this ſuperiority encreaſes, and ſurpaſſes the oppoſite chances, the probability receives a proportionable encreaſe, and begets ſtill a higher degree of belief or aſſent to that ſide, in which we diſcover the ſuperiority. If a dye were marked with one figure or number of ſpots on four ſides, and with another figure or number of ſpots on the two remaining ſides, it would be more probable, that the former would turn up than the latter; though, if it had a thouſand ſides marked in the ſame manner, and only one ſide different, the probability would be much higher, and our belief or expectation of the event more

* Mr. Locke divides all arguments into demonſtrative and probable. In this view, we muſt ſay, that it is only probable all men muſt die, or that the ſun will riſe to-morrow. But to conform our language more to common uſe, we ought to divide arguments into *demonſtrations*, *proofs*, and *probabilities*. By proofs meaning ſuch arguments from experience as leave no room for doubt or oppoſition.

more ſteady and ſecure. This proceſs of the thought or reaſoning may ſeem trivial and obvious; but to thoſe who conſider it more narrowly, it may, perhaps, afford matter for curious ſpeculation.

It ſeems evident, that, when the mind looks forward to diſcover the event, which may reſult from the throw of ſuch a dye, it conſiders the turning up of each particular ſide as alike probable; and this is the very nature of chance, to render all the particular events, comprehended in it, entirely equal. But finding a greater number of ſides concur in the one event than in the other, the mind is carried more frequently to the event, and meets it oftener, in revolving the various poſſibilities or chances, on which the ultimate reſult depends. This concurrence of ſeveral views in one particular event begets immediately, by an inexplicable contrivance of nature, the ſentiment of belief, and gives that event the advantage over its antagoniſt, which is ſupported by a ſmaller number of views, and recurs leſs frequently to the mind. If we allow, that belief is nothing but a firmer and ſtronger conception of an object than what attends the mere fictions of the imagination, this operation may, perhaps, in ſome meaſure, be accounted for. The concurrence of theſe ſeveral views or glimpſes imprints the idea more ſtrongly on the imagination; gives it ſuperior force and vigour; renders its influence on the paſſions and affections more ſenſible; and in a word, begets that reliance or ſecurity, which conſtitutes the nature of belief and opinion.

The caſe is the ſame with the probability of cauſes, as with that of chance. There are ſome cauſes, which are entirely uniform and conſtant in producing a particular effect; and no inſtance has ever yet been found of any failure or irregularity in their operation. Fire has always burned, and

and water suffocated every human creature: The production of motion by impulse and gravity is an universal law, which has hitherto admitted of no exception. But there are other causes, which have been found more irregular and uncertain; nor has rhubarb always proved a purge, or opium a soporific to every one, who has taken these medicines. It is true, when any cause fails of producing its usual effect, philosophers ascribe not this to any irregularity in nature; but suppose, that some secret causes, in the particular structure of parts, have prevented the operation. Our reasonings, however, and conclusions concerning the event are the same as if this principle had no place. Being determined by custom to transfer the past to the future, in all our inferences; where the past has been entirely regular and uniform, we expect the event with the greatest assurance, and leave no room for any contrary supposition. But where different effects have been found to follow from causes, which are to *appearance* exactly similar, all these various effects must occur to the mind in transferring the past to the future, and enter into our consideration, when we determine the probability of the event. Though we give the preference to that which has been found most usual, and believe that this effect will exist, we must not overlook the other effects, but must assign to each of them a particular weight and authority, in proportion as we have found it to be more or less frequent. It is more probable, in almost every country of Europe, that there will be frost sometime in January, than that the weather will continue open throughout that whole month; though this probability varies according to the different climates, and approaches to a certainty in the more northern kingdoms. Here then it seems evident, that, when we transfer the past to the future, in order to determine the effect, which will result

result from any cause, we transfer all the different events, in the same proportion as they have appeared in the past, and conceive one to have existed a hundred times, for instance, another ten times, and another once. As a great number of views do here concur in one event, they fortify and confirm it to the imagination, beget that sentiment which we call *belief*, and give its object the preference above the contrary event, which is not supported by an equal number of experiments, and recurs not so frequently to the thought in transferring the past to the future. Let any one try to account for the operation of the mind upon any of the received systems of philosophy, and he will be sensible of the difficulty. For my part, I shall think it sufficient, if the present hints excite the curiosity of philosophers, and make them sensible how defective all common theories are in treating of such curious and such sublime subjects.

SECTION VII.

Of the IDEA of NECESSARY CONNEXION.

PART I.

THE great advantage of the mathematical ſciences above the moral conſiſts in this, that the ideas of the former, being ſenſible, are always clear and determinate, the ſmalleſt diſtinction between them is immediately perceptible, and the ſame terms are ſtill expreſſive of the ſame ideas, without ambiguity or variation. An oval is never miſtaken for a circle, nor an hyperbola for an ellipſis. The iſoſceles and ſcalenum are diſtinguiſhed by boundaries more exact than vice and virtue, right and wrong. If any term be defined in geometry, the mind readily, of itſelf, ſubſtitutes, on all occaſions, the definition for the term defined: Or even when no definition is employed, the object itſelf may be preſented to the ſenſes, and by that means be ſteadily and clearly apprehended. But the finer ſentiments of the mind, the operations of the underſtanding, the various agitations of the paſſions, though really in themſelves diſtinct, eaſily eſcape us, when ſurveyed by reflection; nor is it in our power to recal the original object, as often as we have occaſion to contemplate it. Ambiguity, by this means, is gradually introduced into our reaſonings: Simi-

lar objects are readily taken be to the ſame: And the concluſion becomes at laſt very wide of the premiſes.

One may ſafely, however, affirm, that if we conſider theſe ſciences in a proper light, their advantages and diſadvantages nearly compenſate each other, and reduce both of them to the ſtate of equality. If the mind, with greater facility, retains the ideas of geometry clear and determinate, it muſt carry on a much longer and more intricate chain of reaſoning, and compare ideas much wider of each other, in order to reach the abſtruſer truths of that ſcience. And if moral ideas are apt, without extreme care, to fall into obſcurity and confuſion, the inferences are always much ſhorter in theſe diſquiſitions, and intermediate ſteps, which lead to the concuſion, much fewer than in the ſciences which treat of quantity and number. In reality, there is ſcarcely a propoſition in Euclid ſo ſimple, as not to conſiſt of more parts, than are to be found in any moral reaſoning which runs not into chimera and conceit. Where we trace the principles of the human mind though a few ſteps, we may be very well ſatisfied with our progreſs; conſidering how ſoon nature throws a bar to all our enquiries concerning cauſes, and reduces us to an acknowledgment of our ignorance. The chief obſtacle, therefore, to our improvement in the moral or metaphyſical ſciences is the obſcurity of the ideas, and ambiguity of the terms. The principal difficulty in the mathematics is the length of inferences and compaſs of thought, requiſite to the forming of any concluſion. And, perhaps, our progreſs in natural philoſophy is chiefly retarded by the want of proper experiments and phænomena, which are often diſcovered by chance, and cannot always be found, when requiſite, even by the moſt diligent and prudent enquiry. As moral philoſophy ſeems hitherto to have received

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lefs improvement than either geometry or phyfics, we may conclude, that, if there be any difference in this refpect among thefe fciences, the difficulties, which obftruct the progrefs of the former, require fuperior care and capacity to be furmounted.

There are no ideas, which occur in metaphyfics, more obfcure and uncertain, than thofe of *power*, *force*, *energy*, or *neceffary connexion*, of which it is every moment neceffary for us to treat in all our difquifitions. We fhall therefore, endeavour, in this fection, to fix, if poffible, the precife meaning of thefe terms, and thereby remove fome part of that obfcurity, which is fo much complained of in this fpecies of philofophy.

It feems a propofition, which will not admit of much difpute, that all our ideas are nothing but copies of our impreffions, or, in other words, that it is impoffible for us to *think* of any thing, which we have not antecedently *felt*, either by our external or internal fenfes. I have endeavoured * to explain and prove this propofition, and have expreffed my hopes, that, by a proper application of it, men may reach a greater clearnefs and precifion in philofophical reafonings, than what they have hitherto been able to attain. Complex ideas may, perhaps, be well known by definition, which is nothing but an enumeration of thofe parts or fimple ideas, that compofe them. But when we have pufhed up definitions to the moft fimple ideas, and find ftill fome ambiguity and obfcurity; what refource are we then poffeffed of? By what invention can we throw light upon thefe ideas, and render them altogether precife and determinate to our intellectual view? Produce the impreffions or original fentiments, from which the ideas are copied. Thefe impreffions are all ftrong and fenfible.

* Section II.

ſible. They abmit not of ambiguity. They are not only placed in a full light themſelves, but may throw light on their correſpondent ideas, which lie in obſcurity. And by this means, we may, perhaps, attain a new microſcope or ſpecies of optics, by which, in the moral ſciences, the moſt minute, and moſt ſimple ideas may be ſo enlarged as to fall readily under our apprehenſion, and be equally known with the groſſeſt and moſt ſenſible ideas, that can be the object of our inquiry.

To be fully acquainted, therefore, with the idea of power or neceſſary connexion, let us examine its impreſſion; and in order to find the impreſſion with greater certainty, let us ſearch for it in all the ſources, from which it may poſſibly be derived.

When we look about us towards external objects, and conſider the operation of cauſes, we are never able, in a ſingle inſtance, to diſcover any power or neceſſary connexion; any quality, which binds the effect to the cauſe, and renders the one an infallible conſequence of the other. We only find, that the one does actually, in fact, follow the other. The impluſe of one billiard-ball is attended with motion in the ſecond. This is the whole that appears to the *outward* ſenſes. The mind feels no ſentiment or *inward* impreſſion from this ſucceſſion of objects: Conſequently, there is not, in any ſingle particular inſtance of cauſe and effect, any thing which can ſuggeſt the idea of power or neceſſary connexion.

From the firſt appearance of an object, we never can conjecture what effect will reſult from it. But were the power or energy of any cauſe diſcoverable by the mind, we could foreſee the effect, even without experience; and might, at firſt, pronounce with certainty concerning it, by the mere dint of thought and reaſoning.

In reality, there is no part of matter, that does ever,

ever, by its ſenſible qualities, diſcover any power or energy, or give us ground to imagine, that it could produce any thing, or be followed by any other object, which we could denominate its effect. Solidity, extenſion, motion; theſe qualities are all complete in themſelves, and never point out any other event which may reſult from them. The ſcenes of the univerſe are continually ſhifting, and one object follows another in an uninterrupted ſucceſſion; but the power or force, which actuates the whole machine, is entirely concealed from us, and never diſcovers itſelf in any of the ſenſible qualities of body. We know, that, in fact, heat is a conſtant attendant of flame; but what is the connection between them, we have no room ſo much as to conjecture or imagine. It is impoſſible, therefore, that the idea of power can be derived from the contemplation of bodies, in ſingle inſtances of their operation; becauſe no bodies ever diſcover any power, which can be the original of this idea*.

Since, therefore, external objects as they appear to the ſenſes, give us no idea of power or neceſſary connexion, by their operation in particular inſtances, let us ſee, whether this idea be derived from reflection on the operations of our own minds, and be copied from any internal impreſſion. It may be ſaid, that we are every moment conſcious of internal power; while we feel, that, by the ſimple command of our will, we can move the organs of our body, or direct the faculties of our mind. An act of volition produces motion in

* Mr. Locke, in his chapter of power, ſays, that, finding from experience, that there are ſeveral new productions in matter, and concluding that there muſt ſomewhere be a power capable of producing them, we arrive at laſt by this reaſoning at the idea of power. But no reaſoning can ever give us a new, original, ſimple idea; as this philoſopher himſelf confeſſes. This, therefore, can never be the origin of that idea.

in our limbs, or raiſes a new idea in our imagination. This influence of the will we know by conſciouſneſs. Hence we acquire the idea of power or energy; and are certain, that we ourſelves and all other intelligent beings are poſſeſſed of power. This idea, then, is an idea of reflection, ſince it ariſes from reflecting on the operations of our own mind, and on the command which is exercisſed by will, both over the organs of the body and faculties of the ſoul.

We ſhall proceed to examine this pretenſion; and firſt with regard to the influence of volition over the organs of the body. This influence, we may obſerve, is a fact, which, like all other natural events, can be known only by experience, and can never be foreſeen from any apparent energy or power in the cauſe, which connects it with the effect, and renders the one an infallible conſequence of the other. The motion of our body follows upon the command of our will. Of this we are every moment conſcious. But the means, by which this is effected; the energy, by which the will performs ſo extraordinary an operation; of this we are ſo far from being immediately conſcious, that it muſt for ever eſcape our moſt diligent enquiry.

For *firſt*; is there any principle in all nature more myſterious than the union of ſoul with body; by which a ſuppoſed ſpiritual ſubſtance acquires ſuch an influence over a material one, that the moſt refined thought is able to actuate the groſſeſt matter? Were we empowered, by a ſecret wiſh, to remove mountains, or control the planets in their orbit; this extenſive authority would not be more extraordinary, nor more beyond our comprehenſion. But if by conſciouſneſs we perceived any power or energy in the will, we muſt know this power; we muſt know its connexion with the effect; we muſt know the ſecret union of ſoul and body, and the nature of both theſe ſubſtances;

by

by which the one is able to operate, in ſo many inſtances, upon the other.

Secondly, We are not able to move all the organs of the body with a like authority; though we cannot aſſign any reaſon beſides experience, for ſo remarkable a difference between one and the other. Why has the will an influence over the tongue and fingers, not over the heart or liver? This queſtion would never embarraſs us, were we conſcious of a power in the former caſe, not in the latter. We ſhould then perceive, independent of experience, why the authority of will over the organs of the body is circumſcribed within ſuch particular limits. Being in that caſe fully acquainted with the power or force, by which it operates, we ſhould alſo know, why its influence reaches preciſely to ſuch boundaries, and no farther.

A man, ſuddenly ſtruck with a palſy in the leg or arm, or who had newly loſt thoſe members, frequently endeavours, at firſt, to move them, and employ them in their uſual offices. Here he is as much conſcious of power to command ſuch limbs, as a man in perfect health is conſcious of power to actuate any member which remains in its natural ſtate and condition. But conſciouſneſs never deceives. Conſequently, neither in the one caſe nor in the other, are we ever conſcious of any power. We learn the influence of our will from experience alone. And experience only teaches us, how one event conſequently follows another; without inſtructing us in the ſecret connexion, which binds them together, and renders them inſeparable.

Thirdly, We learn from anatomy, that the immediate object of power in voluntary motion, is not the member itſelf which is moved, but certain muſcles, and nerves, and animal ſpirits, and, perhaps, ſomething ſtill more minute and more unknown, through

which

which the motion is successively propagated, ere it reach ere it reach the member itself whose motion is the immediate object of volition. Can there be a more certain proof, that the power, by which this whole operation is performed, so far from being directly and fully known by an inward sentiment or consciousness, is, to the last degree, mysterious and unintelligible? Here the mind wills a certain event: Immediately another event, unknown to ourselves, and totally different from the one intended, is produced: This event produces another, equally unknown: Till at last, through a long succession, the desired event is produced. But if the original power were felt, it must be known: Were it known, its effect must also be known; since all power is relative to its effect. And *vice versa*, if the effect be not known, the power cannot be known nor felt. How indeed can we be conscious of a power to remove our limbs, when we have no such power; but only that to move certain animal spirits, which, though they produce at last the motion of our limbs, yet operate in such a manner as is wholly beyond our comprehension?

We may, therefore, conclude from the whole, I hope, without any temerity, though with assurance; that our idea of power is not copied from any sentiment or consciousness of power within ourselves, when we give rise to animal motion, or apply our limbs to their proper use and office. That their motion follows the command of the will is a matter of common experience, like other natural events: But the power or energy by which this is effected, like that in other natural events, is unknown and inconceivable *.

Shall we then assert, that we are conscious of a power or energy in our own minds, when, by an act or command of our will, we raise up a new idea, fix

* See NOTE [C].

fix the mind to the contemplation of it, turn it on all fides, and at laft difmifs it for fome other idea, when we think that we have furveyed it with fufficient accuracy? I believe the fame arguments will prove, that even this command of the will gives us no real idea of force or energy.

Firft, It muft be allowed, that, when we know a power, we know that very circumftance in the caufe, by which it is enabled to produce the effect: For thefe are fuppofed to be fynonimous. We muft, therefore, know both the caufe and effect, and the relation between them. But do we pretend to be acquainted with the nature of the human foul and the nature of an idea, or the aptitude of the one to produce the other? This is a real creation; a production of fomething out of nothing: Which implies a power fo great, that it may feem, at firft fight, beyond the reach of any being, lefs than infinite. At leaft it muft be owned, that fuch a power is not felt, nor known, nor even conceivable by the mind. We only feel the event, namely, the exiftence of an idea, confequent to a command of the will: But the manner, in which this operation is performed; the power, by which it is produced; is entirely beyond our comprehenfion.

Secondly, The command of the mind over itfelf is limited, as well as its command over the body; and thefe limits are not known by reafon, or any acquaintance with the nature of caufe and effect; but only by experience and obfervation, as in all other natural events and in the operation of external objects. Our authority over our fentiments and paffions is much weaker than that over our ideas; and even the latter authority is circumfcribed within very narrow boundaries. Will any one pretend to affign the ultimate reafon of thefe boundaries, or fhow why the power is deficient in one cafe, not in another?

Thirdly, This felf-command is very different at different times. A man in health poffeffes more

more of it, than one languiſhing with ſickneſs. We are more maſter of our thoughts in the morning than in the evening: Faſting, than after a full meal. Can we give any reaſon for theſe variations, except experience? Where then is the power, of which we pretend to be conſcious? Is there not here, either in a ſpiritual or material ſubſtance, or both, ſome ſecret mechaniſm or ſtructure of parts, upon which the effect depends, and which, being entirely unknown to us, renders the power or energy of the will equally unknown and incomprehenſible?

Volition is ſurely an act of the mind, with which we are ſufficiently acquainted. Reflect upon it. Conſider it on all ſides. Do you find any thing in it like this creative power, by which it raiſes from nothing a new idea, and with a kind of Fiat, imitates the omnipotence of its Maker, if I may be allowed ſo to ſpeak, who called forth into exiſtence all the various ſcenes of nature? So far from being conſcious of this energy in the will, it requires as certain experience, as that of which we are poſſeſſed, to convince us, that ſuch extraordinary effects do ever reſult from a ſimple act of volition.

The generality of manking never find any difficulty in accounting for the more common and familiar operations of nature; ſuch as the deſcent of heavy bodies, the growth of plants, the generation of animals, or the nouriſhment of bodies by food: But ſuppoſe, that, in all theſe caſes, they perceive the very force or energy of the cauſe, by which it is connected with its effect, and is for ever infallible in its operation. They acquire, by long habit, a turn of mind, that, upon the appearance of the cauſe, they immediately expect with aſſurance its uſual attendant, and hardly conceive it poſſible, that any other event could reſult from it. It is only on the diſcovery of extraordinary phænomena,

mena, ſuch as earthquakes, peſtilence, and prodigies of any kind, that they find themſelves at a loſs to aſſign a proper cauſe, and to explain the manner, in which the effect is produced by it. It is uſual for men, in ſuch difficulties, to have recourſe to ſome inviſible intelligent principle*, as the immediate cauſe of that event, which ſurpriſes them, and which they think, cannot be accounted for from the common powers of nature. But philoſophers, who carry their ſcrutiny a little farther, immediately perceive, that, even in the moſt familiar events, the energy of the cauſe is as unintelligible as in the moſt unuſual, and that we only learn by experience the frequent Conjunction of objects, without being ever able to comprehend any thing like Connexion between them. Here then, many philoſophers think themſelves obliged by reaſon to have recourſe, on all occaſions, to the ſame principle, which the vulgar never appeal to but in caſes, that appear miraculous and ſupernatural. They acknowledge mind and intelligence to be, not only the ultimate and original cauſe of all things, but the immediate and ſole cauſe of every event, which appears in nature. They pretend, that thoſe objects, which are commonly denominated *cauſes*, are in reality nothing but *occaſions*; and that the true and direct principle of every effect is not any power or force in nature, but a volition of the Supreme Being, who wills, that ſuch particular objects ſhould, for ever, be conjoined with each other. Inſtead of ſaying, that one billiard-ball moves another, by a force, which it has derived from the author of nature; it is the Deity himſelf, they ſay, who, by a particular volition, moves the ſecond ball, being determined to this operation by the impulſe of the firſt ball; in conſequence of thoſe general laws, which he has laid down

* Θεος απο μηχανης.

down to himſelf in the government of the univerſe. But philoſophers advancing ſtill in their enquiries, diſcover, that, as we are totally ignorant of the power, on which depends the mutual operation of bodies, we are no leſs ignorant of that power, on which depends the operation of mind on body, or of body on mind; nor are we able, either from our ſenſes or conſciouſneſs, to aſſign the ultimate principle in one caſe, more than in the other. The ſame ignorance, therefore, reduces them to the ſame concluſion. They aſſert, that the Deity is the immediate cauſe of the union between ſoul and body; and that they are not the organs of ſenſe, which, being agitated by external objects, produce ſenſations in the mind; but that it is a particular volition of our omnipotent Maker, which excites ſuch a ſenſation, in conſequence of ſuch a motion in the organ. In like manner, it is not any energy in the will, in the will, that produces local motion in our members: It is God himſelf, who is pleaſed to ſecond our will, in itſelf impotent, and to command that motion, which we erroneouſly attribute to our own power and efficacy. Nor do philoſophers ſtop at this concluſion. They ſometimes extend the ſame inference to the mind itſelf, in its internal operations. Our mental viſion or conception of ideas is nothing but a revelation made to us by our Maker. When we voluntarily turn our thoughts to any object, and raiſe up its image in the fancy; it is not the will which creates that idea: It is the univerſal Creator, who diſcovers it to the mind, and renders it preſent to us.

Thus, according to theſe philoſophers, every thing is full of God. Not content with the principle, that nothing exiſts but by his will, that nothing poſſeſſes any power but by his conceſ-

ſion:

ſion: They rob nature, and all created beings, of every power, in order to render their dependence on the Deity ſtill more ſenſible and immediate. They conſider not, that, by this theory, they diminiſh, inſtead of magnifying, the grandeur of thoſe attributes, which they affect ſo much to celebrate. It argues ſurely more power in the Deity to delegate a certain degree of power to inferior creatures, than to produce every thing by his own immediate volition. It argues more wiſdom to contrive at firſt the fabric of the world with ſuch perfect foreſight, that, of itſelf, and by its proper operation, it may ſerve all the purpoſes of providence, than if the great Creator were obliged every moment to adjuſt its parts, and animate by his breath all the wheels of that ſtupendous machine.

But if we would have a more philoſophical confutation of this theory, perhaps the two following reflections may ſuffice.

Firſt, It ſeems to me, that this theory of the univerſal energy and operation of the Supreme Being, is too bold ever to carry conviction with it to a man, ſufficiently apprized of the weakneſs of human reaſon, and the narrow limits, to which it is confined in all its operations. Though the chain of arguments, which conduct to it, were ever ſo logical, there muſt ariſe a ſtrong ſuſpicion, if not an abſolute aſſurance, that it has carried us quite beyond the reach of our faculties, when it leads to concluſions ſo extraordinary, and ſo remote from common life and experience. We are got into fairy land, long ere we have reached the laſt ſteps of our theory; and *there* we have no reaſon to truſt our common methods of argument, or to think that our uſual analogies and probabilities have any authority. Our line is too ſhort to fathom ſuch immenſe abyſſes. And however we may flatter ourſelves, that we are guided, in every ſtep which we take, by a kind

of verisimilitude and experience; we way be assured, that this fancied experience has no authority, when we thus apply it to subjects, that lie entirely out of the sphere of experience. But on this we shall have occasion to touch afterwards*.

Secondly, I cannot perceive any force in the arguments, on which this theory is founded. We are ignorant, it is true, of the manner in which bodies operate on each other: Their force or energy is entirely incomprehensible: But are we not equally ignorant of the manner or force by which a mind, even the supreme mind, operates either on itself or on body? Whence, I beseech you, do we acquire any idea of it? We have no sentiment or consciousness of this power in ourselves. We have no idea of the Supreme Being but what we learn from reflection on our own faculties. Were our ignorance, therefore, a good reason for rejecting any thing, we should be led into that principle of denying all energy in the Supreme Being as much as in the grossest matter. We surely comprehend as little the operations of one as of the other. Is it more difficult to conceive, that motion may arise from impulse, than that it may arise from volition? All we know is our profound ignorance in both cases †.

PART II.

But to hasten to a conclusion of this argument, which is already drawn out to too great a length: We have sought in vain for an idea of power or necessary connexion, in all the sources from which we could suppose it to be derived. It appears, that, in single instances of the operation of bodies, we never can, by our utmost scrutiny, discover any thing but one event following another; without being able to comprehend

* Section XII.

† See NOTE [D].

hend any force or power, by which the caufe operates, or any connexion between it and its fuppofed effect. The fame difficulty occurs in contemplaiting the operations of mind on body; where we obferve the motion of the latter to follow upon the volition of the former; but are not able to obferve or conceive the tye, which binds together the motion and volition, or the energy by which the mind produces this effect. The authority of the will over its own faculties and ideas is not a whit more comprehenfible: So that, upon the whole, there appears not, throughout all nature, any one inftance of connexion, which is conceivable by us. All events feem entirely loofe and feparate. One event follows another; but we never can obferve any tye between them. They feem *conjoined*, but never *connected*. And as we can have no idea of any thing, which never appeared to our outward fenfe or inward fentiment, the neceffary conclufion *feems* to be, that we have no idea of connexion or power at all, and that thefe words are abfolutely without any meaning, when employed either in philofophical reafonings, or common life.

But there ftill remains one method of avoiding this conclufion, and one fource which we have not yet examined. When any natural object or event is prefented, it is impoffible for us, by any fagacity or penetration, to difcover, or even conjecture, without experience, what event will refult from it, or to carry our forefight beyond that object, which is immediately prefent to the memory and fenfes. Even after one inftance or experiment, where we have obferved a particular event to follow upon another, we are not entitled to form a general rule, or foretel what will happen in like cafes; it being juftly efteemed an unpardonable temerity to judge of the whole courfe of nature from one fingle experiment, how-

ever

ever accurate or certain. But when one particular ſpecies of event has always, in all inſtances, been conjoined with another, we make no longer any ſcruple of foretelling one upon the appearance of the other, and of employing that reaſoning, which can alone aſſure us of any matter of fact or exiſtence. We then call the one object, *Cauſe*; the other, *Effect*. We ſuppoſe, that there is ſome connexion between them; ſome power in the one, by which it infallibly produces the other, and operates with the greateſt certainty and ſtrongeſt neceſſity.

It appears, then, that this idea of a neceſſary connexion among events ariſes from a number of ſimilar inſtances, which occur, of the conſtant conjunction of theſe events; nor can that idea ever be ſuggeſted by any one of theſe inſtances, ſurveyed in all poſſible lights and poſitions. But there is nothing in a number of inſtances, different from any ſingle inſtance, which is ſuppoſed to be exactly ſimilar; except only, that after a repetition of ſimilar inſtances, the mind is carried by habit, upon the appearance of one event, to expect its uſual attendant, and to believe, that it will exiſt. This connexion, therefore, which we *feel* in the mind, this cuſtomary tranſition of the imagination from one object to its uſual attendant, is the ſentiment or impreſſion, from which we form the idea of power or neceſſary connexion. Nothing farther is in the caſe. Contemplate the ſubject on all ſides; you will never find any other origin of that idea. This is the ſole difference between one inſtance from which we can never receive the idea of connexion, and a number of ſimilar inſtances, by which it is ſuggeſted. The firſt time a man ſaw the communication of motion by impulſe, as by the ſhock of two billiard-balls, he could not pronounce that the one event was *connected:* but only that it was

conjoined

conjoined with the other. After he has obſerved ſeveral inſtances of this nature, he then pronounces them to be *connected.* What alteration has happened to give riſe to this new idea of *connexion?* Nothing but that he now *feels* theſe events to be *connected* in his imagination, and can readily foretel the exiſtence of one from the appearance of the other. When we ſay, therefore, that one object is connected with another, we mean only, that they have acquired a connexion in our thought, and give riſe to this inference, by which they become proofs of each other's exiſtence: A concluſion, which is ſomewhat extraordinary; but which ſeems founded on ſufficient evidence. Nor will its evidence be weakened by any general diffidence of the underſtanding, or ſceptical ſuſpicion concerning every concluſion, which is new and extraordinary. No concluſions can be more agreeable to ſcepticiſm than ſuch as make diſcoveries concerning the weakneſs and narrow limits of human reaſon and capacity.

And what ſtronger inſtance can be produced of the ſurpriſing ignorance and weakneſs of the underſtanding, than the preſent? For ſurely, if there be any relation among objects, which it imports us to know perfectly, it is cauſe and effect. On this are founded all our reaſonings concerning matter of fact or exiſtence. By means of it alone we attain any aſſurance concerning objects, which are removed from the preſent teſtimony of our memory and ſenſes. The only immediate utility of all ſciences, is to teach us, how to control and regulate future events by their cauſes. Our thoughts and enquiries are, therefore, every moment, employed about this relation: Yet ſo imperfect are the ideas which we form concerning it, that it is impoſſible to give any juſt definition of cauſe, except what is drawn from ſomething extraneous and foreign to it. Similar

objects are always conjoined with similar. Of this we have experience. Suitably to this experience, therefore, we may define a cause to be *an object, followed by another, and where all the objects, similar to the first, are followed by objects similar to the second.* Or in other words, *where, if the first object had not been, the second never had existed.* The appearance of a cause always conveys the mind, by a customary transition, to the idea of the effect. Of this also we have experience. We may, therefore, suitably to this experience, form another definition of cause; and call it, *an object followed by another, and whose appearance always conveys the thought to that other.* But though both these definitions be drawn from circumstances foreign to the cause, we cannot remedy this inconvenience, or attain any more perfect definition, which may point out that circumstance in the cause, which gives it a connexion with its effect. We have no idea of this connexion; nor even any distinct notion what it is we desire to know, when we endeavour at a conception of it. We say, for instance, that the vibration of this string is the cause of this particular sound. But what do we mean by that affirmation? We either mean, *that this vibration is followed by this sound, and that all similar vibrations have been followed by similar sounds:* Or, *that this vibration is followed by this sound, and that upon the appearance of one, the mind anticipates the senses, and forms immediately an idea of the other.* We may consider the relation of cause and effect in either of these two lights; but beyond these, we have no idea of it*.

To recapitulate, therefore, the reasonings of this section: Every idea is copied from some preceding impression or sentiment; and where we cannot find any impression, we may be certain that there is no idea. In all single instances of the

* See NOTE [E].

the operation of bodies or minds, there is nothing that produces any impreſſion, nor conſequently can ſuggeſt any idea, of power or neceſſary connexion. But when many uniform inſtances appear, and the ſame object is always followed by the ſame event; we then begin to entertain the notion of cauſe and connexion. We then *feel* a new ſentiment or impreſſion, to wit, a cuſtomary connexion in the thought or imagination between one object and its uſual attendant; and this ſentiment is the original of that idea which we ſeek for. For as this idea ariſes from a number of ſimilar inſtances, and not from any ſingle inſtance; it muſt ariſe from that circumſtance, in which the number of inſtances differ from every individual inſtance. But this cuſtomary connexion or tranſition of the imagination is the only circumſtance, in which they differ. In every other particular they are alike. The firſt inſtance which we ſaw of motion, communicated by the ſhock of two billiard-balls (to return to this obvious illuſtration) is exactly ſimilar to any inſtance that may, at preſent, occur to us; except only, that we could not, at firſt, *infer* one event from the other; which we are enabled to do at preſent, after ſo long a courſe of uniform experience. I know not, whether the reader will readily apprehend this reaſoning. I am afraid, that, ſhould I multiply words about it, or throw it into a greater variety of lights, it would only become more obſcure and intricate. In all abſtract reaſonings, there is one point of view, which, if we can happily hit, we ſhall go farther towards illuſtrating the ſubject, than by all the eloquence and copious expreſſion in the world. This point of view we ſhould endeavour to reach, and reſerve the flowers of rhetoric for ſubjects which are more adapted to them.

SECTION VIII.

Of LIBERTY and NECESSITY.

PART I.

IT might reaſonably be expected, in queſtions, which have been canvaſſed and diſputed with great eagerneſs, ſince the firſt origin of ſcience and philoſophy, that the meaning of all the terms, at leaſt, ſhould have been agreed upon among the diſputants; and our enquiries, in the courſe of two thouſand years, been able to paſs from words to the true and real ſubject of the controverſy. For how eaſy may it ſeem to give exact definitions of the terms employed in reaſoning, and make theſe definitions, not the mere ſound of words, the object of future ſcrutiny and examination? But if we conſider the matter more narrowly, we ſhall be apt to draw a quite oppoſite concluſion. From this circumſtance alone, that a controverſy has been long kept on foot, and remains ſtill undecided, we may preſume, that there is ſome ambiguity in the expreſſion, and that the diſputants affix different ideas to the terms employed in the controverſy. For as the faculties of the mind are ſuppoſed to be naturally alike in every individual; otherwiſe nothing could be more fruitleſs than to reaſon or diſpute together; it were impoſſible,

ſible, if men affix the ſame ideas to their terms that they could ſo long form different opinions of the ſame ſubject; eſpecially when they communicate their views, and each party turn themſelves on all ſides, in ſearch of arguments, which may give them the victory over their antagoniſts. It is true; if men attempt the diſcuſſion of queſtions, which lie entirely beyond the reach of human capacity, ſuch as thoſe concerning the origin of worlds, or the œconomy of the intellectual ſyſtem or region of ſpirits, they may long beat the air in their fruitleſs conteſts, and never arrive at any determinate concluſion. But if the queſtion regard any ſubject of common life and experience; nothing, one would thing, could preſerve the diſpute ſo long undecided, but ſome ambiguous expreſſions, which keep the antagoniſts ſtill at a diſtance, and hinder them from grappling with each other.

This has been the caſe in the long diſputed queſtion concerning liberty and neceſſity; and to ſo remarkable a degree, that, if I be not much miſtaken, we ſhall find, that all mankind, both learned and ignorant, have always been of the ſame opinion with regard to this ſubject, and that a few intelligible definitions would immediately have put an end to the whole controverſy. I own, that this diſpute has been ſo much canvaſſed on all hands, and has led philoſophers into ſuch a labyrinth of obſcure ſophiſtry, that it is no wonder, if a ſenſible reader indulge his eaſe ſo far as to turn a deaf ear to the propoſal of ſuch a queſtion, from which he can expect neither inſtruction nor entertainment. But the ſtate of the argument here propoſed may, perhaps, ſerve to renew his attention; as it has more novelty, promiſes at leaſt ſome deciſion of the controverſy, and will not much diſturb his eaſe by any intricate or obſcure reaſoning.

I hope,

I hope, therefore, to make it appear, that all men have ever agreed in the doctrine both of necessity and of liberty, according to any reasonable sense, which can be put on these terms; and that the whole controversy has hitherto turned merely upon words. We shall begin with examining the doctrine of necessity.

It is universally allowed, that matter, in all its operations, is actuated by a necessary force, and that every natural effect is so precisely determined by the energy of its cause, that no other effect, in such particular circumstances, could possibly have resulted from it. The degree and direction of every motion is, by the laws of nature, prescribed with such exactness, that a living creature may as soon arise from the shock of two bodies, as motion, in any other degree or direction than what is actually produced by it. Would we, therefore, form a just and precise idea of *necessity*, we must consider whence that idea arises, when we apply it to the operation of bodies.

It seems evident, that, if all the scenes of nature were continually shifted in such a manner, that no two events bore any resemblance to each other, but every object was entirely new, without any similitude to whatever had been seen before, we should never, in that case, have attained the least idea of necessity, or of a connexion among these objects. We might say, upon such a supposition, that one object or event has followed another; not that one was produced by the other. The relation of cause and effect must be utterly unknown to mankind. Inference and reasoning concerning the operations of nature would, from that moment, be at an end; and the memory and senses remain the only canals, by which the knowledge of any real existence could possibly have access to the mind. Our idea, therefore, of necessity and causation arises entirely

entirely from the uniformity, obſervable in the operations of nature; where ſimilar objects are conſtantly conjoined together, and the mind is determined by cuſtom to infer the one from the appearance of the other. Theſe two circumſtances form the whole of that neceſſity, which we aſcribe to matter. Beyond the conſtant *conjunction* of ſimilar objects, and the conſequent *inference* from one to the other, we have no notion of any neceſſity, or connexion.

If it appear, therefore, that all mankind have ever allowed, without any doubt or heſitation, that theſe two circumſtances take place in the voluntary actions of men, and in the operations of mind; it muſt follow, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of neceſſity, and that they have hitherto diſputed, merely for not underſtanding each other.

As to the firſt circumſtance, the conſtant and regular conjunction of ſimilar events; we may poſſibly ſatisfy ourſelves by the following conſiderations. It is univerſally acknowleded, that there is a great uniformity among the actions of men, in all nations and ages, and that human nature remains ſtill the ſame, in its principles and operations. The ſame motives always produce the ſame actions: The ſame events follow from the ſame cauſes. Ambition, avarice, ſelf-love, vanity, friendſhp, generoſity, public ſpirit; theſe paſſions, mixed in various degrees, and diſtributed through ſociety, have been, from the beginning of the world, and ſtill are, the ſource of all the actions and enterprizes, which have ever been obſerved among mankind. Would you know the ſentiments, inclinations, and courſe of life of the Greeks and Romans? Study well the temper and actions of the French and Engliſh. You cannot be much miſtaken in transferring to the former *moſt* of the obſervations, which you have made with

with regard to the latter. Mankind are ſo much the ſame, in all times and places, that hiſtory informs us of nothing new or ſtrange in this particular. Its chief uſe is only to diſcover the conſtant and univerſal principles of human nature, by ſhewing men in all varieties of circumſtances and ſituations, and furniſhing us with materials, from which we may form our obſervations, and become acquainted with the regular ſprings of human action and behaviour. Theſe records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions, are ſo many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philoſopher fixes the principles of his ſcience; in the ſame manner as the phyſician or natural philoſopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments, which he forms concerning them. Nor are the earth, water, and other elements, examined by Ariſtotle, and Hippocrates, more like to thoſe, which at preſent lie under our obſervation, than the men, deſcribed by Polybius and Tacitus, are to thoſe, who now govern the world.

Should a traveller, returning from a far country, bring us an account of men, wholly different from any, with whom we were ever acquainted; men, who were entirely diveſted of avarice, ambition, or revenge; who knew no pleaſure but friendſhip, generoſity, and public ſpirit; we ſhould immediately, from theſe circumſtances, detect the falſehood, and prove him a liar, with the ſame certainty as if he had ſtuffed his narration with ſtories of centaurs and dragons, miracles and prodigies. And if we would explode any forgery in hiſtory, we cannot make uſe of a more convincing argument, than to prove, that the actions, aſcribed to any perſon, are directly contrary to the courſe of nature, and that no human motives, in ſuch circumſtances, could ever induce him to ſuch a conduct.

conduct. The veracity of Quintus Curtius is as much to be suspected, when he describes the supernatural courage of Alexander, by which he was hurried on singly to attack multitudes, as when he describes his supernatural force and activity, by which he was able to resist them. So readily and universally do we acknowledge a uniformity in human motives and actions as well as in the operations of body.

Hence likewise the benefit of that experience, acquired by long life and a variety of business and company, in order to instruct us in the principles of human nature, and regulate our future conduct, as well as speculation. By means of this guide, we mount up to the knowledge of men's inclinations and motives, from their actions, expressions, and even gestures; and again, descend to the interpretation of their actions from our knowledge of their motives and inclinations. The general observations, treasured up by a course of experience, give us the clue of human nature, and teach us to unravel all its intricacies. Pretexts and appearances no longer deceive us. Public declarations pass for the specious colouring of a cause. And though virtue and honour be allowed their proper weight and authority, that perfect disinterestedness, so often pretended to, is never expected in multitudes and parties; seldom in their leaders; and scarcely even in individuals of any rank or station. But were there no uniformity in human actions, and were every experiment, which we could form of this kind, irregular and anomalous, it were impossible to collect any general observations concerning mankind; and no experience, however accurately digested by reflection, would ever serve to any purpose. Why is the aged husbandman more skilful in his calling than the young beginner, but because there is a certain uniformity in the operation of the sun, rain,

and

and earth, towards the production of vegetables; and experience teaches the old practitioner the rules, by which this operation is governed and directed.

We muſt not, however, expect, that this uniformity of human actions ſhould be carried to ſuch a length, as that all men, in the ſame circumſtances, will always act preciſely in the ſame manner, without making any allowance for the diverſity of characters, prejudices, and opinions. Such a uniformity in every particular, is found in no part of nature. On the contrary, from obſerving the variety of conduct in different men, we are enabled to form a greater variety of maxims, which ſtill ſuppoſe a degree of uniformity and regularity.

Are the manners of men different in different ages and countries? We learn thence the great force of cuſtom and education, which mould the human mind from its infancy, and form it into a fixed and eſtabliſhed character. Is the behaviour and conduct of the one ſex very unlike that of the other? It is thence we become acquainted with the different characters, which nature has impreſſed upon the ſexes, and which ſhe preſerves with conſtancy and regularity. Are the actions of the ſame perſon much diverſified in the different periods of his life, from infancy to old age? This affords room for many general obſervations concerning the gradual change of our ſentiments and inclinations, and the different maxims, which prevail in the different ages of human creatures. Even the characters, which are peculiar to each individual, have a uniformity in their influence; otherwiſe our acquaintance with the perſons and our obſervation of their conduct, could never teach us their diſpoſitions, or ſerve to direct our behaviour with regard to them.

I grant

I grant it possible to find some actions, which seem to have no regular connexion with any known motives, and are exceptions to all the measures of conduct, which have ever been established for the government of men. But if we would willingly know, what judgment should be formed of such irregular and extraordinary actions; we may consider the sentiments, commonly entertained with regard to those irregular events, which appear in the course of nature, and the operations of external objects. All causes are not conjoined to their usual effects, with like uniformity. An artificer, who handles only dead matter, may be disappointed of his aim, as well as the politician, who directs the conduct of sensible and intelligent agents.

The vulgar, who take things according to their first appearance, attribute the uncertainty of events to such an uncertainty in the causes as makes the latter often fail of their usual influence; though they meet with no impediment in their operation. But philosophers, observing, that, almost in every part of nature, there is contained a vast variety of springs and principles, which are hid, by reason of their minuteness or remoteness, find, that it is at least possible the contrariety of events may not proceed from any contingency in the cause, but from the secret operation of contrary causes. This possibility is converted into certainty by farther observation; when they remark, that, upon an exact scrutiny, a contrariety of effects always betrays a contrariety of causes, and proceeds from their mutual opposition. A peasant can give no better reason for the stopping of any clock or watch than to say that it does not commonly go right: But an artist easily perceives, that the same force in the spring or pendulum has always the same influence on the wheels; but fails of its usual effect, perhaps by reason of a grain of dust, which puts a stop to the

the whole movement. From the obſervation of ſeveral parallel inſtances, philoſophers form a maxim, that the connexion between all cauſes and effects is equally neceſſary, and that its ſeeming uncertainty in ſome inſtances proceeds from the ſecret oppoſition of contrary cauſes.

Thus for inſtance, in the human body, when the uſual ſymptoms of health or ſickneſs diſappoint our expectation; when medicines operate not with their wonted powers; when irregular events follow from any particular cauſe; the philoſopher and phyſician are not ſurprized at the matter, nor are ever tempted to deny, in general, the neceſſity and uniformity of thoſe principles, by which the animal œconomy is conducted. They know, that a human body is a mighty complicated machine: That many ſecret powers lurk in it, which are altogether beyond our comprehenſion: That to us it muſt often appear very uncertain in its operations: And that therefore the irregular events, which outwardly diſcover themſelves, can be no proof, that the laws of nature are not obſerved with the greateſt regularity in its internal operations and government.

The philoſopher, if he be conſiſtent, muſt apply the ſame reaſoning to the actions and volitions of intelligent agents. The moſt irregular and unexpected reſolutions of men may frequently be accounted for by thoſe, who know every particular circumſtance of their character and ſituation. A perſon of an obliging diſpoſition gives a peeviſh anſwer. But he has the toothake, or has not dined. A ſtupid fellow diſcovers an uncommon alacrity in his carriage: But he has met with a ſudden piece of good fortune. Or even when an action, as ſometimes happens, cannot be particularly accounted for, either by the perſon himſelf or by others; we know, in general, that the characters of men are, to a certain degree, inconſtant and irregular.

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This is, in a manner, the conſtant character of human nature; though it be applicable, in a more particular manner, to ſome perſons, who have no fixed rule for their conduct, but proceed in a continued courſe of caprice and inconſtancy. The internal principles and motives may operate in a uniform manner, notwithſtanding theſe ſeeming irregularities; in the ſame manner as the winds, rain, clouds, and other variations of the weather are ſuppoſed to be governed by ſteady principles; though not eaſily diſcoverable by human ſagacity and enquiry.

Thus it appears, not only that the conjunction between motives and voluntary actions is as regular and uniform, as that between the cauſe and effect in any part of nature; but alſo that this regular conjunction has been univerſally acknowledged among mankind, and has never been the ſubject of diſpute, either in philoſophy or common life. Now, as it is from paſt experience, that we draw all inferences concerning the future, and as we conclude, that objects will always be conjoined together, which we find to have always been conjoined; it may ſeem ſuperfluous to prove, that this experienced uniformity in human actions is a ſource, whence we draw *inferences* concerning them. But in order to throw the argument into a greater variety of lights, we ſhall alſo inſiſt, though briefly, on this latter topic.

The mutual dependence of men is ſo great, in all ſocieties, that ſcarce any human action is entirely compleat in itſelf, or is performed without ſome reference to the actions of others, which are requiſite to make it anſwer fully the intention of the agent. The pooreſt artificer, who labours alone, expects at leaſt the protection of the magiſtrate, to enſure him the enjoyment of the fruits of his labour. He alſo expects, that, when he

carries his goods to market, and offers them at a reaſonable price, he ſhall find purchaſers; and ſhall be able, by the money he acquires, to engage others to ſupply him with thoſe commodities, which are requiſite for his ſubſiſtence. In proportion as men extend their dealings, and render their intercourſe with others more complicated, they always comprehend, in their ſchemes of life, a greater variety of voluntary actions, which they expect, from the proper motives, to co-operate with their own. In all theſe concluſions, they take their meaſures from paſt experience, in the ſame manner as in their reaſonings concerning external objects; and firmly believe, that men, as well as all the elements, are to continue, in their operations, the ſame, that they have ever found them. A manufacturer reckons upon the labour of his ſervants, for the execution of any work, as much as upon the tools, which he employs, and would be equally ſurprized, were his expectations diſappointed. In ſhort, this experimental inference and reaſoning concerning the actions of others enters ſo much into human life, that no man, while awake, is ever a moment without employing it. Have we not reaſon, therefore, to affirm, that all mankind have always agreed in the doctrine of neceſſity, according to the foregoing definition and explication of it?

Nor have philoſophers ever entertained a different opinion from the people in this particular. For not to mention, that almoſt every action of their life ſuppoſes that opinion; there are even few of the ſpeculative parts of learning, to which it is not eſſential. What would become of *hiſtory*, had we not a dependence on the veracity of the hiſtorian, according to the experience, which we have had of mankind? How could *politics* be a ſcience, if laws and forms of government had not a uniform influence upon ſociety? Where would be the

the foundation of *morals*, if particular characters had no certain or determinate power to produce particular ſentiments, and if theſe ſentiments had no conſtant operation on actions? And with what pretence could we employ our *criticiſm* upon any poet or polite author, if we could not pronounce the conduct and ſentiment of his actors, either natural or unnatural, to ſuch characters, and in ſuch circumſtances? It ſeems almoſt impoſſible, therefore, to engage, either in ſcience or action of any kind, without acknowledging the doctrine of neceſſity, and this *inference* from motives to voluntary actions; from characters to conduct.

And indeed, when we conſider how aptly *natural* and *moral* evidence link together, and form only one chain of argument, we ſhall make no ſcruple to allow, that they are of the ſame nature, and derived from the ſame principles. A priſoner, who has neither money nor intereſt, diſcovers the impoſſibility of his eſcape, as well when he conſiders the obſtinacy of the gaoler, as the walls and bars, with which he is ſurrounded; and, in all attempts for his freedom, chuſes rather to work upon the ſtone and iron of the one, than upon the inflexible nature of the other. The ſame priſoner, when conducted to the ſcaffold, foreſees his death as certainly from the conſtancy and fidelity, of his guards, as from the operation of the ax or wheel. His mind runs along a certain train of ideas: The refuſal of the ſoldiers to conſent to his eſcape; the action of the executioner; the ſeparation of the head and body; bleeding, convulſive motions, and death. Here is a connected chain of natural cauſes and voluntary actions; but the mind feels no difference between them, in paſſing from one link to another: Nor is leſs certain of the future event than if it were connected with the objects preſent to the memory or ſenſes, by a train of cauſes, cemented together by what we are pleaſed to call a

phyſical

physical neceſſity. The ſame experienced union has the ſame effect on the mind, whether the united objects be motives, volition, and actions; or figure and motion. We may change the names of things; but their nature and their operation on the underſtanding never change.

Were a man, whom I know to be honeſt and opulent, and with whom I live in intimate friendſhip, to come into my houſe, where I am ſurrounded with my ſervants, I reſt aſſured, that he is not to ſtab me before he leaves it, in order to rob me of my ſilver ſtandiſh; and I no more ſuſpect this event, than the falling of the houſe itſelf which is new, and ſolidly built and founded.—*But he may have been ſeized with a ſudden and unknown frenzy.*—So may a ſudden earthquake ariſe, and ſhake and tumble my houſe about my ears. I ſhall therefore change the ſuppoſitions. I ſhall ſay, that I know with certainty, that he is not to put his hand into the fire, and hold it there, till it be conſumed: And this event, I think I can foretell with the ſame aſſurance, as that, if he throw himſelf out at the window, and meet with no obſtruction, he will not remain a moment ſuſpended in the air. No ſuſpicion of an unknown frenzy can give the leaſt poſſibility to the former event, which is ſo contrary to all the known principles of human nature. A man who at noon leaves his purſe full of gold on the pavement at Charing-Croſs, may as well expect that it will fly away like a feather, as that he will find it untouched an hour after. Above one half of human reaſonings contain inferences of a ſimilar nature, attended with more or leſs degrees of certainty, proportioned to our experience of the uſual conduct of mankind in ſuch particular ſituations.

I have frequently considered, what could possibly be the reason, why all mankind, though they have ever, without hesitation, acknowledged the doctrine of necessity, in their whole practice and reasoning, have yet discovered such a reluctance to acknowledge it in words, and have rather shewn a propensity, in all ages, to profess the contrary opinion. The matter, I think, may be accounted for, after the following manner. If we examine the operations of body, and the production of effects from their causes, we shall find, that all our faculties can never carry us farther in our knowledge of this relation, than barely to observe, that particular objects are *constantly conjoined* together, and that the mind is carried, by a *customary transition*, from the appearance of one to the belief of the other. But though this conclusion concerning human ignorance be the result of the strictest scrutiny of this subject, men still entertain a strong propensity to believe, that they penetrate farther into the powers of nature, and perceive something like a necessary connexion between the cause and the effect. When again they turn their reflections towards the operations of their own minds, and *feel* no such connexion of the motive and the action; they are thence apt to suppose, that there is a difference between the effects, which result from material force, and those which arise from thought and intelligence. But being once convinced, that we know nothing farther of causation of any kind, than merely the *constant conjunction* of objects, and the consequent *inference* of the mind from one to another, and finding, that these two circumstances are universally allowed to have place in voluntary actions; we may be more easily led to own the same necessity common to all causes. And though this reasoning may contradict the systems of many philosophers, in ascribing necessity to the determinations of the will, we shall find, upon

upon reflection, that they diffent from it in words only, not in their real fentiment. Neceffity, according to the fenfe, in which it is here taken, has never yet been rejected, nor can ever, I think, be rejected by any philofopher. It may only, perhaps, be pretended, that the mind can perceive, in the operations of matter, fome farther connexion between the caufe and effect; and a connexion that has not place in the voluntary actions of intelligent beings. Now whether it be fo or not, can only appear upon examination; and it is incumbent on thefe philofophers to make good their affertion, by defining or defcribing that neceffity, and pointing it out to us in the operations of material caufes.

It would feem, indeed, that men begin at the wrong end of this queftion concerning liberty and neceffity, when they enter upon it by examining the faculties of the foul, the influence of the underftanding, and the operations of the will. Let them firft difcufs a more fimple queftion, namely, the operations of body and of brute unintelligent matter; and try whether they can there form any idea of caufation and neceffity, except that of a conftant conjunction of objects, and fubfequent inference of the mind from one to another. If thefe circumftances form, in reality, the whole of that neceffity, which we conceive in matter, and if thefe circumftances be alfo univerfally acknowledged to take place in the operations of the mind, the difpute is at an end; at leaft, muft be owned to be thenceforth merely verbal. But as long as we will rafhly fuppofe, that we have fome farther idea of neceffity and caufation in the operations of external objects; at the fame time, that we can find nothing farther, in the voluntary actions of the mind; there is no poffibility of bringing the queftion to any determinate iffue, while we pro-

ceed upon ſo erroneous a ſuppoſition. The only method of undeceiving us, is, to mount up higher; to examine the narrow extent of ſcience when applied to material cauſes; and to convince ourſelves, that all we know of them, is, the conſtant conjunction and inference above mentioned. We may, perhaps, find, that it is with difficulty we are induced to fix ſuch narrow limits to human underſtanding: But we can afterwards find no difficulty when we come to apply this doctrine to the actions of the will. For as it is evident, that theſe have a regular conjunction with motives and circumſtances and characters, and as we always draw inferences from one to the other, we muſt be obliged to acknowledge in words, that neceſſity, which we have already avowed, in every deliberation of our lives, and in every ſtep of our conduct and behaviour *.

But to proceed in this reconciling project with regard to the queſtion of liberty and neceſſity; the moſt contentious queſtion, of metaphyſics, the moſt contentious ſcience; it will not require many words to prove, that all mankind have ever agreed in the doctrine of liberty as well as in that of neceſſity, and that the whole diſpute, in this reſpect alſo, has been hitherto merely verbal. For what is meant by liberty, when applied to voluntary actions? We cannot ſurely mean, that actions have ſo little connexion with motives, inclinations, and circumſtances, that one does not follow with a certain degree of uniformity from the other, and that one affords no inference by which we can conclude the exiſtence of the other. For theſe are plain and acknowledged matters of fact. By liberty, then, we can only mean *a power of acting or not acting, according to the determinations of the will*; that is, if

* See NOTE [F].

if we chuse to remain at rest, we may; if we chuse to move, we also may. Now this hypothetical liberty is universally allowed to belong to every one, who is not a prisoner and in chains. Here then is no subject of dispute.

Whatever definition we may give of liberty, we should be careful to observe two requisite circumstances; *first*, that it be consistent with plain matter of fact; *secondly*, that it be consistent with itself. If we observe these circumstances, and render our definition intelligible, I am persuaded that all mankind will be found of one opinion with regard to it.

It is universally allowed, that nothing exists without a cause of its existence, and that chance, when strictly examined, is a mere negative word, and means not any real power, which has any where, a being in nature. But it is pretended, that some causes are necessary, some not necessary. Here then is the advantage of definitions. Let any one *define* a cause, without comprehending, as a part of the definition, a *necessary connexion* with its effect; and let him shew distinctly the origin of the idea, expressed by the definition; and I shall readily give up the whole controversy. But if the foregoing explication of the matter be received, this must be absolutely impracticable. Had not objects a regular conjunction with each other, we should never have entertained any notion of cause and effect; and this regular conjunction produces that inference of the understanding, which is the only connexion, that we can have any comprehension of. Whoever attempts a definition of cause, exclusive of these circumstances, will be obliged, either to employ unintelligible terms, or such as are synonimous to the term, which he endeavours to define*. And if the definition above mentioned be

* See NOTE [G].

be admitted; liberty, when opposed to necessity, not to constraint, is the same thing with chance; which is universally allowed to have no existence.

PART II.

There is no method of reasoning more common, and yet none more blameable, than, in philosophical disputes, to endeavour the refutation of any hypothesis, by a pretence of its dangerous consequences to religion and morality. When any opinion leads to absurdities, it is certainly false; but it is not certain that an opinion is false, because it is of dangerous consequence. Such topics, therefore, ought entirely to be forborne; as serving nothing to the discovery of truth, but only to make the person of an antagonist odious. This I observe in general, without pretending to draw any advantage from it. I frankly submit to an examination of this kind, and shall venture to affirm, that the doctrines, both of necessity and of liberty, as above explained, are not only consistent with morality, but are absolutely essential to its support.

Necessity may be defined two ways, conformably to the two definitions of *cause*, of which it makes an essential part. It consists either in the constant conjunction of like objects, or in the inference of the understanding from one object to another. Now necessity, in both these senses, (which, indeed, are at the bottom, the same) has universally, though tacitly, in the schools, in the pulpit, and in common life, been allowed to belong to the will of man; and no one has ever pretended to deny, that we can draw inferences concerning human actions, and that those inferences are founded on the experienced union of like actions, with like motives, inclinations, and circumstances. The only particular, in which

any

any one can differ, is, that either, perhaps, he will refuse to give the name of necessity to this property of human actions: But as long as the meaning is understood, I hope the word can do no harm: Or that he will maintain it possible to discover something farther in the operations of matter. But this, it must be acknowledged, can be of no consequence to morality or religion, whatever it may be to natural philosophy or metaphysics. We may here be mistaken in asserting, that there is no idea of any other necessary connexion in the actions of body: But surely we ascribe nothing to the actions of the mind, but what every one does, and must readily allow of. We change no circumstance in the received orthodox system with regard to the will, but only in that with regard to material objects and causes. Nothing therefore can be more innocent, at least, than this doctrine.

All laws being founded on rewards and punishments, it is supposed as a fundamental principle, that these motives have a regular and uniform influence on the mind, and both produce the good and prevent the evil actions. We may give to this influence what name we please; but, as it is usually conjoined with the action, it must be esteemed a *cause*, and be looked upon as an instance of that necessity, which we would here establish.

The only proper object of hatred or vengeance, is a person or creature, endowed with thought and consciousness; and when any criminal or injurious actions excite that passion, it is only by their relation to the person, or connexion with him. Actions are, by their very nature, temporary and perishing; and where they proceed not from some *cause* in the character and disposition of the person who performed them, they can neither redound to his honour, if good;

nor

nor infamy, if evil. The actions themſelves may be blameable; they may be contrary to all the rules of morality and religion: But the perſon is not anſwerable for them; and as they proceeded from nothing in him, that is durable and conſtant, and leave nothing of that nature behind them, it is impoſſible he can upon their account, become the object of puniſhment or vengeance. According to the principle, therefore, which denies neceſſity, and conſequently cauſes, a man is as pure and untainted, after having committed the moſt horrid crime, as at the firſt moment of his birth, nor is his character any wiſe concerned in his actions; ſince they are not derived from it, and the wickedneſs of the one can never be uſed as a proof of the depravity of the other.

Men are not blamed for ſuch actions, as they perform ignorantly and caſually, whatever may be the conſequences. Why? but becauſe the principles of theſe actions are only momentary, and terminate in them alone. Men are leſs blamed for ſuch actions as they perform haſtily and unpremeditately, than for ſuch as proceed from deliberation. For what reaſon? but becauſe a haſty temper, though a conſtant cauſe or principle in the mind, operates only by intervals, and infects not the whole character. Again, repentance wipes off any crime, if attended with a reformation of life and manners. How is this to be accounted for? but by aſſerting, that actions render a perſon criminal, merely as they are proofs of criminal principles in the mind; and when, by an alteration of theſe principles, they ceaſe to be juſt proofs, they likewiſe ceaſe to be criminal. But, except upon the doctrine of neceſſity, they never were juſt proofs, and conſequently never were criminal.

It will be equally eaſy to prove, and from the ſame arguments, that *liberty*, according to that definition

definition above mentioned, in which all men agree, is alſo eſſential to morality, and that no human actions, where it is wanting, are ſuſceptible of any moral qualities, or can be the objects either of approbation or diſlike. For as actions are objects of our moral ſentiment, ſo far only as they are indications of the internal character, paſſions, and affections; it is impoſſible that they can give riſe either to praiſe or blame, where they proceed not from theſe principles, but are derived altogether from external violence.

I pretend not to have obviated or removed all objections to this theory, with regard to neceſſity and liberty. I can foreſee other objections, derived from topics, which have not here been treated of. It may be ſaid, for inſtance, that, if voluntary actions be ſubjected to the ſame laws of neceſſity with the operations of matter, there is a continued chain of neceſſary cauſes, pre-ordained and pre-determined, reaching from the original cauſe of all, to every volition of every human creature. No contingency any where in the univerſe; no indifference; no liberty. While we act, we are, at the ſame time, acted upon. The ultimate Author of all our volitions is the Creator of the world, who firſt beſtowed motion on this immenſe machine, and, placed all beings in that particular poſition, whence every ſubſequent event, by an inevitable neceſſity, muſt reſult. Human actions, therefore, either can have no moral turpitude at all, as proceeding from ſo good a cauſe; or if they have any turpitude, they muſt involve our Creator in the ſame guilt, while he is acknowledged to be their ultimate cauſe and author. For as a man, who fired a mine, is anſwerable for all the conſequences whether the train he employed be long or ſhort; ſo wherever a continued chain of neceſſary cauſes is fixed, that Being, either finite, or infinite,

infinite, who produces the firſt, is likewiſe the author of all the reſt, and muſt both bear the blame and acquire the praiſe, which belong to them. Our clear and unalterable ideas of morality eſtabliſh this rule, upon unqueſtionable reaſons, when we examine the conſequences of any human action; and theſe reaſons muſt ſtill have greater force, when applied to volitions and intentions of a Being, infinitely wiſe and powerful. Ignorance or impotence may be pleaded for ſo limited a creature as man; but thoſe imperfections have no place in our Creator. He foreſaw, he ordained, he intended all thoſe actions of men, which we ſo raſhly pronounce criminal. And we muſt therefore conclude, either that they are not criminal, or that the Deity, not man, is accountable for them. But as either of theſe poſitions is abſurd and impious, it follows, that the doctrine, from which they are deduced, cannot poſſibly be true, as being liable to all the ſame objections. An abſurd conſequence, if neceſſary, proves the original doctrine to be abſurd; in the ſame manner as criminal actions render criminal the original cauſe, if the connexion between them be neceſſary and inevitable.

This objection conſiſts of two parts, which we ſhall examine ſeparately; *Firſt*, that, if human actions can be traced up, by a neceſſary chain, to the Deity, they can never be criminal; on account of the infinite perfection of that Being, from whom they are derived, and who can intend nothing but what is altogether good and laudable. Or, *Secondly*, if they be criminal, we muſt retract the attribute of perfection, which we aſcribe to the Deity, and muſt acknowledge him to be the ultimate author of guilt and moral turpitude in all his creatures.

The anſwer to the firſt objection ſeems obvious and convincing. There are many philoſophers, who,

who, after an exact ſcrutiny of all the phænomena of nature, conclude, that the Whole, conſidered as one ſyſtem, is, in every period of its exiſtence, ordered with perfect benevolence; and that the utmoſt poſſible happineſs will, in the end, reſult to all created beings, without any mixture of poſitive or abſolute ill and miſery. Every phyſical ill, ſay they, makes an eſſential part of this benevolent ſyſtem, and could not poſſibly be removed, even by the Deity himſelf, conſidered as a wiſe agent, without giving entrance to greater ill, or excluding greater good, which will reſult from it. From this theory, ſome philoſophers, and the ancient *Stoics* among the reſt, derived a topic of conſolation under all afflictions, while they taught their pupils, that thoſe ills, under which they laboured, were, in reality, goods to the univerſe; and that to an enlarged view, which could comprehend the whole ſyſtem of nature, every event became an object of joy and exultation. But though this topic be ſpecious and ſublime, it was ſoon found in practice weak and ineffectual. You would ſurely more irritate, than appeaſe a man, lying under the racking pains of the gout, by preaching up to him the rectitude of thoſe general laws, which produced the malignent humours in his body, and led them through the proper canals, to the ſinews and nerves, where they now excite ſuch acute torments. Theſe enlarged views may, for a moment, pleaſe the imagination of a ſpeculative man, who is placed in eaſe and ſecurity; but neither can they dwell with conſtancy on his mind, even though undiſturbed by the emotions of pain or paſſion; much leſs can they maintain their ground, when attacked by ſuch powerful antagoniſts. The affections take a narrower and more natural ſurvey of their object; and by an œconomy, more ſuitable to the infirmity of human minds,

minds, regard alone the beings around us, and are actuated by ſuch events as appear good or ill to the private ſyſtem.

The caſe is the ſame with *moral* as with *phyſical* ill. It cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that thoſe remote conſiderations, which are found of ſo little efficacy with regard to one, will have a more powerful influence with regard to the other. The mind of man is ſo formed by nature, that, upon the appearance of certain characters, diſpoſitions, and actions, it immediately feels the ſentiment of approbation or blame; nor are there any emotions more eſſential to its frame and conſtitution. The characters, which engage our approbation, are chiefly ſuch as contribute to the peace and ſecurity of human ſociety; as the characters, which excite blame, are chiefly ſuch as tend to public detriment and diſturbance: Whence it may reaſonably be preſumed, that the moral ſentiments ariſe, either mediately or immediately, from a reflection on theſe oppoſite intereſts. What though philoſophical meditations eſtabliſh a different opinion or conjecture; that every thing is right with regard to the whole, and that the qualities, which diſturb ſociety, are, in the main, as beneficial, and are as ſuitable to the primary intention of nature, as thoſe which more directly promote its happineſs and welfare? Are ſuch remote and uncertain ſpeculations able to counterbalance the ſentiments, which ariſe from the natural and immediate view of the objects? A man who is robbed of a conſiderable ſum; does he find his vexation for the loſs any wiſe diminiſhed by theſe ſublime reflections? Why then ſhould his moral reſentment againſt the crime be ſuppoſed incompatible with them? Or why ſhould not the acknowledgment of a real diſtinction between vice and virtue be reconcileable to all ſpeculative ſyſtems of philoſophy, as well as that of a real diſtinction between perſonal

beauty

beauty and deformity? Both theſe diſtinctions are founded in the natural ſentiments of the human mind: And theſe ſentiments are not to be controuled or altered by any philoſophical theory or ſpeculation whatſoever.

The *ſecond* objection admits not of ſo eaſy and ſatisfactory an anſwer; nor is it poſſible to explain diſtinctly, how the Deity can be the mediate cauſe of all the actions of men, without being the author of ſin and moral turpitude. Theſe are myſteries, which mere natural and unaſſiſted reaſon is very unfit to handle; and whatever ſyſtem ſhe embraces, ſhe muſt find herſelf involved in inextricable difficulties, and even contradictions, at every ſtep which ſhe takes with regard to ſuch ſubjects. To reconcile the indifference and contingency of human actions with preſcience; or to defend abſolute decrees, and yet free the Deity from being the author of ſin, has been found hitherto to exceed all the power of philoſophy. Happy, if ſhe be thence ſenſible of her temerity, when ſhe pries into theſe ſublime myſteries; and leaving a ſcene ſo full of obſcurities and perplexities, return, with ſuitable modeſty, to her true and proper province, the examination of common life; where ſhe will find difficulties enow to employ her enquiries, without launching into ſo boundleſs an ocean of doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction!

SECTION IX.

Of the Reason of Animals.

ALL our reaſonings concerning matter of fact are founded on a ſpecies of Analogy, which leads us to expect from any cauſe the ſame events, which we have obſerved to reſult from ſimilar cauſes. Where the cauſes are entirely ſimilar, the analogy is perfect, and the inference, drawn from it, is regarded as certain and concluſive: Nor does any man ever entertain a doubt, where he ſees a piece of iron, that it will have weight and coheſion of parts; as in all other inſtances, which have ever fallen under his obſervation. But where the objects have not ſo exact a ſimilarity, the analogy is leſs perfect, and the inference is leſs concluſive; though ſtill it has ſome force, in proportion to the degree of ſimilarity and reſemblance. The anatomical obſervations, formed upon one animal, are, by this ſpecies of reaſoning, extended to all animals; and it is certain, that when the circulation of the blood, for inſtance, is clearly proved to have place in one creature, as a frog, or fiſh, it forms a ſtrong preſumption, that the ſame principle has place in all. Theſe analogical obſervations may be carried farther, even to this ſcience,

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of which we are now treating; and any theory, by which we explain the operations of the underſtanding, or the origin and connexion of the paſſions in man, will acquire additional authority, if we find, that the ſame theory is requiſite to explain the ſame phænomena in all other animals. We ſhall make trial of this, with regard to the hypotheſis, by which, we have, in the foregoing diſcourſe, endeavoured to account for all experimental reaſonings; and it is hoped, that this new point of view will ſerve to confirm all our former obſervations.

Firſt, It ſeems evident, that animals, as well as men learn many things from experience, and infer, that the ſame events will always follow from the ſame cauſes. By this principle they become acquainted with the more obvious properties of external objects, and gradually, from their birth, treaſure up a knowledge of the nature of fire, water, earth, ſtones, heights, depths, *&c.* and of the effects, which reſult from their operation. The ignorance and inexperience of the young are here plainly diſtinguiſhable from the cunning and ſagacity of the old, who have learned, by long obſervation, to avoid what hurt them, and to purſue what gave eaſe or pleaſure. A horſe, that has been accuſtomed to the field, becomes acquainted with the proper height, which he can leap, and will never attempt what exceeds his force and ability. An old greyhound will truſt the more fatiguing part of the chace to the younger, and will place himſelf ſo as to meet the hare in her doubles; nor are the conjectures, which he forms on this occaſion, founded in any thing but his obſervation and experience.

This is ſtill more evident from the effects of diſcipline and education on animals, who, by the proper application of rewards and puniſhments, may

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be taught any courſe of action, the moſt contrary to their natural inſtincts and propenſities. Is it not experience, which renders a dog apprehenſive of pain, when you menace him, or lift up the whip to beat him? Is it not even experience, which makes him anſwer to his name, and infer, from ſuch an arbitrary ſound, that you mean him rather than any of his fellows, and intend to call him, when you pronounce it in a certain manner, and with a certain tone and accent?

In all theſe caſes, we may obſerve, that the animal infers ſome fact beyond what immediately ſtrikes his ſenſes: and that this inference is altogether founded on paſt experience, while the creature expects from the preſent object the ſame conſequences, which it has always found in its obſervation to reſult from ſimilar objects.

Secondly, It is impoſſible, that this inference of the animal can be founded on any proceſs of argument or reaſoning, by which he concludes, that like events muſt follow like objects, and that the courſe of nature will always be regular in its operations. For if there be in reality any arguments of this nature, they ſurely lie too abſtruſe for the obſervation of ſuch imperfect underſtandings; ſince it may well employ the utmoſt care and attention of a philoſophic genius to diſcover and obſerve them. Animals, therefore, are not guided in theſe inferences by reaſoning: Neither are children: Neither are the generality of mankind, in their ordinary actions and concluſions: Neither are philoſophers themſelves, who, in all the active parts of life, are, in the main, the ſame with the vulgar, and are governed by the ſame maxims. Nature muſt have provided ſome other principle, of more ready, and more general uſe and application; nor can an operation of ſuch immenſe conſequence in life, as that of inferring ef-

fects from causes, be trusted to the uncertain process of reasoning and argumentation. Were this doubtful with regard to men, it seems to admit of no question with regard to the brute creation; and the conclusion being once firmly established in the one, we have a strong presumption, from all the rules of analogy, that it ought to be universally admitted, without any exception or reserve. It is custom alone, which engages animals, from every object, that strikes their senses, to infer its usual attendant, and carries their imagination, from the appearance of the one, to conceive the other, in that particular manner, which we denominate *belief*. No other explication can be given of this operation, in all the higher, as well as lower classes of sensitive beings, which fall under our notice and observation *.

But though animals learn many parts of their knowledge from observation, there are also many parts of it, which they derive from the original hand of nature; which much exceed the share of capacity they possess on ordinary occasions; and in which they improve, little or nothing, by the longest practice and experience. These we denominate Instincts, and are so apt to admire, as something very extraordinary, and inexplicable by all the disquisitions of human understanding. But our wonder will, perhaps, cease or diminish; when we consider, that the experimental reasoning itself, which we possess in common with beasts, and on which the whole conduct of life depends, is nothing but a species of instinct or mechanical power, that acts in us unknown to ourselves; and in its chief operations, is not directed by any such relations or comparisons of ideas, as are the proper objects of our intellectual faculties. Though the instinct be different,

* See NOTE [H].

different, yet ſtill it is an inſtinct, which teaches a man to avoid the fire; as much as that, which teaches a bird, with ſuch exactneſs, the art of incubation, and the whole œconomy and order of its nurſery.

SECTION X.

Of MIRACLES.

PART I.

THERE is, in Dr. Tillotſon's writings, an argument againſt the *real preſence*, which is as conciſe, and elegant, and ſtrong as any argument can poſſibly be ſuppoſed againſt a doctrine, ſo little worthy of a ſerious refutation. It is acknowledged on all hands, ſays the learned prelate, that the authority, either of the ſcripture or of tradition, is founded merely in the teſtimony of the apoſtles, who were eye-witneſſes to thoſe miracles of our Saviour, by which he proved his divine miſſion. Our evidence, then, for the truth of the *Chriſtian* religion is leſs than the evidence for the truth of our ſenſes; becauſe, even in the firſt authors of our religion, it was no greater; and it is evident it muſt diminiſh in paſſing from them to their diſciples; nor can any one reſt ſuch confidence in their teſtimony, as in the immediate object of his ſenſes. But a weaker evidence can never deſtroy a ſtronger; and therefore, were the doctrine of the real preſence ever ſo clearly revealed in ſcripture, it were directly contrary to the rules of juſt reaſoning to give our aſſent to it. It contradicts ſenſe, though both the ſcripture

ture and tradition, on which it is ſuppoſed to be built, carry not ſuch evidence with them as ſenſe; when they are conſidered merely as external evidences, and are not brought home to every one's breaſt, by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit.

Nothing is ſo convenient as a deciſive argument of this kind, which muſt at leaſt *ſilence* the moſt arrogant bigotry and ſuperſtition, and free us from their impertinent ſolicitations. I flatter myſelf, that I have diſcovered an argument of a like nature, which, if juſt, will, with the wiſe and learned, be an everlaſting check to all kinds of ſuperſtitious deluſion, and conſequently, will be uſeful as long as the world endures. For ſo long, I preſume, will the accounts of miracles and prodigies be found in all hiſtory, ſacred and profane.

Though experience be our only guide in reaſoning concerning matters of fact; it muſt be acknowledged, that this guide is not altogether infallible, but in ſome caſes is apt to lead us into errors. One, who in our climate, ſhould expect better weather in any week of June than in one of December, would reaſon juſtly, and conformably to experience; but it is certain, that he may happen, in the event, to find himſelf miſtaken. However, we may obſerve, that, in ſuch a caſe, he would have no cauſe to complain of experience; becauſe it commonly informs us beforehand of the uncertainty, by that contrariety of events, which we may learn from a diligent obſervation. All effects follow not with like certainty from their ſuppoſed cauſes. Some events are found, in all countries and all ages, to have been conſtantly conjoined together: Others are found to have been more variable, and ſometimes to diſappoint our expectations; ſo that, in our reaſonings concerning matter of fact, there are all imaginable degrees of aſſurance, from the

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highest certainty to the lowest species of moral evidence.

A wise man, therefore, proportions his belief to the evidence. In such conclusions as are founded on an infallible experience, he expects the event with the last degree of assurance, and regards his past experience as a full *proof* of the future existence of that event. In other cases, he proceeds with more caution: He weighs the opposite experiments: He considers which side is supported by the greater number of experiments: To that side he inclines, with doubt and hesitation; and when at last he fixes his judgment, the evidence exceeds not what we properly call *probability*. All probability, then, supposes an opposition of experiments and observations, where the one side is found to overbalance the other, and to produce a degree of evidence, proportioned to the superiority. A hundred instances or experiments on one side, and fifty on another, afford a doubtful expectation of any event; though an hundred uniform experiments, with only one that is contradictory, reasonably beget a pretty strong degree of assurance. In all cases, we must balance the opposite experiments, where they are opposite, and deduct the smaller number from the greater, in order to know the exact force of the superior evidence.

To apply these principles to a particular instance: we may observe, that there is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that which is derived from the testimony of men, and the reports of eye-witnesses and spectators. This species of reasoning, perhaps, one may deny to be founded on the relation of cause and effect. I shall not dispute about a word. It will be sufficient to observe, that our assurance in any argument of this kind is derived from no other principle than our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual

conformity

conformity of facts to the reports of witneſſes. It being a general maxim, that no objects have any diſcoverable connexion together, and that all the inferences, which we can draw from one to another, are founded merely on our experience of their conſtant and regular conjunction, it is evident, that we ought not to make an exception to this maxim in favour of human teſtimony, whoſe connexion with any event ſeems, in itſelf, as little neceſſary as any other. Were not the memory tenacious to a certain degree; had not men commonly an inclination to truth and a principle of probity; were they not ſenſible to ſhame, when detected in a falſehood: Were not theſe, I ſay, diſcovered by *experience* to be qualities, inherent in human nature, we ſhould never repoſe the leaſt confidence in human teſtimony. A man delirious, or noted for falſehood and villany, has no manner of authority with us.

And as the evidence, derived from witneſſes and human teſtimony, is founded on paſt experience, ſo it varies with the experience, and is regarded either as a *proof* or a *probability*, according as the conjunction between any particular kind of report and any kind of object has been found to be conſtant or variable. There are a number of circumſtances to be taken into conſideration in all judgments of this kind; and the ultimate ſtandard, by which we determine all diſputes, that may ariſe concerning them, is always derived from experience and obſervation. Where this experience is not entirely uniform on any ſide, it is attended with an unavoidable contrariety in our judgments, and with the ſame oppoſition and mutual deſtruction of argument as in every other kind of evidence. We frequently heſitate concerning the reports of others. We balance the oppoſite circumſtances, which cauſe any doubt or uncertainty; and when we diſcover a ſuperiority

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on any ſide, we incline to it; but ſtill with a diminution of aſſurance, in proportion to the force of its antagoniſt.

This contrariety of evidence, in the preſent caſe, may be derived from ſeveral different cauſes; from the oppoſition of contrary teſtimony; from the character or number of the witneſſes; from the manner of their delivering their teſtimony; or from the union of all theſe circumſtances. We entertain a ſuſpicion concerning any matter of fact, when the witneſſes contradict each other; when they are but few, or of a doubtful character; when they have an intereſt in what they affirm; when they deliver their teſtimony with heſitation, or on the contrary, with too violent aſſeverations. There are many other particulars of the ſame kind, which may diminiſh or deſtroy the force of any argument, derived from human teſtimony.

Suppoſe, for inſtance, that the fact, which the teſtimony endeavours to eſtabliſh, partakes of the extraordinary and the marvellous; in that caſe, the evidence, reſulting from the teſtimony, admits of a diminution, greater or leſs, in proportion as the fact is more or leſs unuſual. The reaſon, why we place any credit, in witneſſes and hiſtorians, is not derived from any *connexion*, which we perceive *à priori*, between teſtimony and reality, but becauſe we are accuſtomed to find a conformity between them. But when the fact atteſted is ſuch a one as has ſeldom fallen under our obſervation, here is a conteſt of two oppoſite experiences; of which the one deſtroys the other, as far as its force goes, and the ſuperior can only operate on the mind by the force, which remains. The very ſame principle of experience, which gives us a certain degree of aſſurance in the teſtimony of witneſſes, gives us alſo, in this caſe, another degree of aſſurance againſt the fact, which they

they endeavour to eſtabliſh; from which contradiction there neceſſarily ariſes a counterpoize, and mutual deſtruction of belief and authority.

I ſhould not believe ſuch a ſtory were it told me by Cato; was a proverbial ſaying in Rome, even during the life-time of that philoſophical patriot *. The incredibility of a fact, it was allowed, might invalidate ſo great an authority.

The Indian prince, who refuſed to believe the firſt relations concerning the effects of froſt, reaſoned juſtly; and it naturally required very ſtrong teſtimony to engage his aſſent to facts, that aroſe from a ſtate of nature, with which he was unacquainted, and which bore ſo little analogy to thoſe events, of which he had had conſtant and uniform experience. Though they were not contrary to his experience, they were not conformable to it †.

But in order to encreaſe the probability againſt the teſtimony of witneſſes, let us ſuppoſe, that the fact, which they affirm, inſtead of being only marvellous, is really miraculous; and ſuppoſe alſo, that the teſtimony, conſidered apart and in itſelf, amounts to an entire proof; in that caſe, there is proof againſt proof, of which the ſtrongeſt muſt prevail, but ſtill with a diminution of its force, in proportion to that of its antagoniſt.

A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has eſtabliſhed theſe laws, the proof againſt a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can poſſibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable, that all men muſt die; that lead cannot, of itſelf, remain ſuſpended

* PLUTARCH, in vita Catonis.

† See NOTE [I].

pended in the air; that fire consumes wood, and is extinguished by water; unless it be, that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a violation of these laws, or in other words, a miracle to prevent them? Nothing is esteemed a miracle, if it ever happen in the common course of nature. It is no miracle that a man, seemingly in good health, should die on a sudden: because such a kind of death, though more unusual than any other, has yet been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle, that a dead man should come to life; because that has never been observed, in any age or country. There must, therefore, be an uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as an uniform experience amounts to a proof, there is here a direct and full *proof*, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof, which is superior *.

The plain consequence is (and it is a general maxim of our attention), " That no testimony is " sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the tes- " timony be of such a kind, that its falsehood " would be more miraculous, than the fact, which " it endeavours to establish: And even in that " case there is a mutual destruction of arguments, " and the superior only gives us an assurance " suitable to that degree of force, which re- " mains, after deducting the inferior." When any one tells me, that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it be more probable, that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact, which he relates, should really have happened.

I weigh

* See NOTE [K].

I weigh the one miracle againſt the other; and according to the ſuperiority, which I diſcover, I pronounce my deciſion, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falſehood of his teſtimony would be more miraculous, than the event which he relates; then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.

PART II.

In the foregoing reaſoning we have ſuppoſed, that the teſtimony, upon which a miracle is founded, may poſſibly amount to an entire proof, and that the falſehood of that teſtimony would be a real prodigy: But it is eaſy to ſhew, that we have been a great deal too liberal in our conceſſion, and that there never was a miraculous event eſtabliſhed on ſo full an evidence.

For *firſt*, there is not to be found, in all hiſtory, any miracle atteſted by a ſufficient number of men, of ſuch unqueſtioned good-ſenſe, education, and learning, as to ſecure us againſt all deluſion in themſelves; of ſuch undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all ſuſpicion of any deſign to deceive others; of ſuch credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to loſe in caſe of their being detected in any falſehood; and at the ſame time, atteſting facts, performed in ſuch a public manner, and in ſo celebrated a part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable: All which circumſtances are requiſite to give us a full aſſurance in the teſtimony of men.

Secondly. We may obſerve in human nature a principle, which, if ſtrictly examined, will be found to diminiſh extremely the aſſurance, which we might, from human teſtimony, have, in any kind of prodigy. The maxim, by which we commonly conduct ourſelves in our reaſonings, is,

that the objects, of which we have no experience, resemble those, of which we have; that what we have found to be most usual is always most probable; and that where there is an opposition of arguments, we ought to give the preference to such as are founded on the greatest number of past observations. But though, in proceeding by this rule, we readily reject any fact which is unusual and incredible in an ordinary degree; yet in advancing farther, the mind observes not always the same rule; but when any thing is affirmed utterly absurd and miraculous, it rather the more readily admits of such a fact, upon account of that very circumstance, which ought to destroy all its authority. The passion of *surprize* and *wonder*, arising from miracles, being an agreeable emotion, gives a sensible tendency towards the belief of those events, from which it is derived. And this goes so far, that even those who cannot enjoy this pleasure immediately, nor can believe those miraculous events, of which they are informed, yet love to partake of the satisfaction at second-hand or by rebound, and place a pride and delight in exciting the admiration of others.

With what greediness are the miraculous accounts of travellers received, their descriptions of sea and land monsters, their relations of wonderful adventures, strange men, and uncouth manners? But if the spirit of religion join itself to the love of wonder, there is an end of common sense; and human testimony, in these circumstances, loses all pretensions to authority. A religionist may be an enthusiast, and imagine he sees what has no reality: He may know his narrative to be false, and yet persevere in it, with the best intentions in the world, for the sake of promoting so holy a cause: Or even where this delusion has not place, vanity, excited by so strong a temptation, operates on him more powerfully than on the

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rest of mankind in any other circumstances; and self-interest with equal force. His auditors may not have, and commonly have not, sufficient judgment to canvass his evidence: What judgment they have, they renounce by principle, in these sublime and mysterious subjects: Or if they were ever so willing to employ it, passion and a heated imagination disturb the regularity of its operations. Their credulity encreases his impudence: And his impudence overpowers their credulity.

Eloquence, when at its highest pitch, leaves little room for reason or reflection; but addressing itself entirely to the fancy or affections, captivates the willing hearers, and subdues their understanding. Happily, this pitch it seldom attains. But what a Tully or a Demosthenes could scarcely effect over a Roman or Athenian audience, every *Capuchin*, every itinerant or stationary teacher can perform over the generality of mankind, and in a higher degree, by touching such gross and vulgar passions.

The many instances of forged miracles, and prophecies, and supernatural events, which, in all ages, have either been detected by contrary evidence, or which detect themselves by their absurdity, prove sufficiently the strong propensity of mankind to the extraordinary and the marvellous, and ought reasonably to beget a suspicion against all relations of this kind. This is our natural way of thinking, even with regard to the most common and most credible events. For instance: There is no kind of report, which rises so easily, and spreads so quickly, especially in country places and provincial towns, as those concerning marriages; insomuch that two young persons of equal condition never see each other twice, but the whole neighbourhood immediately join them together. The pleasure of telling a piece of news so interesting,

ing, of propagating it, and of being the firſt reporters of it, ſpreads the intelligence. And this is ſo well known, that no man of ſenſe gives attention to theſe reports, till he find them confirmed by ſome greater evidence. Do not the ſame paſſions, and others ſtill ſtronger, incline the generality of mankind to believe and report, with the greateſt vehemence and aſſurance, all religious miracles?

Thirdly. It forms a ſtrong preſumption againſt all ſupernatural and miraculous relations, that they are obſerved chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations; or if a civilized people has ever given admiſſion to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous anceſtors, who tranſmitted them with that inviolable ſanction and authority, which always attend received opinions. When we peruſe the firſt hiſtories of all nations, we are apt to imagine ourſelves tranſported into ſome new world; where the whole frame of nature is disjointed, and every element performs its operations in a different manner, from what it does at preſent. Battles, revolutions, peſtilence, famine, and death, are never the effect of thoſe natural cauſes, which we experience. Prodigies, omens, oracles, judgments, quite obſcure the few natural events, that are intermingled with them. But as the former grow thinner every page, in proportion as we advance nearer the enlightened ages, we ſoon learn, that there is nothing myſterious or ſupernatural in the caſe, but that all proceeds from the uſual propenſity of mankind towards the marvellous, and that, though this inclination may at intervals receive a check from ſenſe and learning, it can never be thoroughly extirpated from human nature.

It is ſtrange, a judicious reader is apt to ſay, upon the peruſal of theſe wonderful hiſtorians, *that*

ſuch

ſuch prodigious events never happen in our days. But it is nothing ſtrange, I hope, that men ſhould lie in all ages. You muſt ſurely have ſeen inſtances enow of that frailty. You have yourſelf heard many ſuch marvellous relations ſtarted, which, being treated with ſcorn by all the wiſe and judicious, have at laſt been abandoned even by the vulgar. Be aſſured, that thoſe renowned lies, which have ſpread and flouriſhed to ſuch a monſtrous height, aroſe from like beginnings; but being ſown in a more proper ſoil, ſhot up at laſt into prodigies almoſt equal to thoſe which they relate.

It was a wiſe policy in that falſe prophet, Alexander, who, though now forgotten, was once ſo famous, to lay the firſt ſcene of his impoſtures in Paphlagonia, where, as Lucian tells us, the people were extremely ignorant and ſtupid, and ready to ſwallow even the groſſeſt deluſion. People at a diſtance, who are weak enough to think the matter at all worth enquiry, have no opportunity of receiving better information. The ſtories come magnified to them by a hundred circumſtances. Fools are induſtrious in propagating the impoſture; while the wiſe and learned are contented, in general, to deride its abſurdity, without informing themſelves of the particular facts, by which it may be diſtinctly refuted. And thus the impoſtor above-mentioned was enabled to proceed, from his ignorant Paphlagonians, to the enliſting of votaries, even among the Grecian philoſophers, and men of the moſt eminent rank and diſtinction in Rome: Nay, could engage the attention of that ſage emperor Marcus Aurelius; ſo far as to make him truſt the ſucceſs of a military expedition to his deluſive prophecies.

The advantages are ſo great, of ſtarting an impoſture among an ignorant people, that, even though the deluſion ſhould be too groſs to impoſe

poſe on the generality of them (*which, though ſeldom, is ſometimes the caſe*) it has a much better chance for ſucceeding in remote countries, than if the firſt ſcene had been laid in a city renowned for arts and knowledge. The moſt ignorant and barbarous of theſe barbarians carry the report abroad. None of their countrymen have a large correſpondence, or ſufficient credit and authority to contradict and beat down the deluſion. Men's inclination to the marvellous has full opportunity to diſplay itſelf. And thus a ſtory, which is univerſally exploded in the place where it was firſt ſtarted, ſhall paſs for certain at a thouſand miles diſtance. But had Alexander fixed his reſidence at Athens, the philoſophers of that renowned mart of learning had immediately ſpread, throughout the whole Roman empire, their ſenſe of the matter; which, being ſupported by ſo great authority, and diſplayed by all the force of reaſon and eloquence, had entirely opened the eyes of mankind. It is true; Lucian, paſſing by chance through Paphlagonia, had an opportunity of performing this good office. But, though much to be wiſhed, it does not always happen, that every Alexander meets with a Lucian, ready to expoſe and detect his impoſtures.

I may add as a *fourth* reaſon, which diminiſhes the authority of prodigies, that there is no teſtimony for any, even thoſe which have not been expreſsly detected, that is not oppoſed by an infinite number of witneſſes; ſo that not only the miracle deſtroys the credit of teſtimony, but the teſtimony deſtroys itſelf. To make this the better underſtood, let us conſider, that, in matters of religion, whatever is different is contrary; and that it is impoſſible the religions of ancient Rome, of Turkey, of Siam, and of China ſhould, all of them, be eſtabliſhed on any ſolid foundati-

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on. Every miracle, therefore, pretended to have been wrought in any of these religions (and all of them abound in miracles), as its direct scope is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed; so has it the same force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other system. In destroying a rival system, it likewise destroys the credit of those miracles, on which that system was established; so that all the prodigies of different religions are to be regarded as contrary facts, and the evidences of these prodigies, whether weak or strong, as opposite to each other. According to this method of reasoning, when we believe any miracle of Mahomet or his successors, we have for our warrant the testimony of a few barbarous Arabians: And on the other hand, we are to regard the authority of Titus Livius, Plutarch, Tacitus, and, in short, of all the authors and witnesses, Grecian, Chinese, and Roman Catholic, who have related any miracle in their particular religion; I say, we are to regard their testimony in the same light as if they had mentioned that Mahometan miracle, and had in express terms contradicted it, with the same certainty as they have for the miracle they relate. This argument may appear over subtile and refined; but is not in reality different from the reasoning of a judge, who supposes, that the credit of two witnesses, maintaining a crime against any one, is destroyed by the testimony of two others, who affirm him to have been two hundred leagues distant, at the same instant when the crime is said to have been committed.

One of the best attested miracles in all profane history, is that which Tacitus reports of Vespasian, who cured a blind man in Alexandria, by means of his spittle, and a lame man by the mere touch of his foot; in obedience to a vision of the god Serapis, who had enjoined them to have

recourſe to the Emperor, for theſe miraculous cures. The ſtory may be ſeen in that fine hiſtorian *; where every circumſtance ſeems to add weight to the teſtimony, and might be diſplayed at large with all the force of argument and eloquence, if any one were now concerned to enforce the evidence of that exploded and idolatrous ſuperſtition. The gravity, ſolidity, age, and probity of ſo great an emperor, who, through the whole courſe of his life, converſed in a familiar manner with his friends and courtiers, and never affected thoſe extraordinary airs of divinity aſſumed by Alexander and Demetrius. The hiſtorian, a cotemporary writer, noted for candour and veracity, and withal, the greateſt and moſt penetrating genius, perhaps, of all antiquity; and ſo free from any tendency to credulity, that he even lies under the contrary imputation, of atheiſm and profaneneſs: The perſons, from whoſe authority he related the miracle, of eſtabliſhed character for judgment and veracity, as we may well preſume; eye-witneſſes of the fact, and confirming their teſtimony, after the Flavian family was deſpoiled of the empire, and could no longer give any reward, as the price of a lie. *Utrumque, qui interfuere, nunc quoque memorant, poſtquam nullum mendacio pretium.* To which if we add the public nature of the facts, as related, it will appear, that no evidence can well be ſuppoſed ſtronger for ſo groſs and ſo palpable a falſehood.

There is alſo a memorable ſtory related by Cardinal de Retz, which may well deſerve our conſideration. When that intriguing politician fled into Spain, to avoid the perſecution of his enemies, he paſſed through Saragoſſa, the capital of Arragon, where he was ſhewn, in the cathedral,

 a man,

* Hiſt. lib. v. cap. 8. Suetonius gives nearly the ſame account *in vita* VESP.

a man, who had ſerved ſeven years as a door-keeper, and was well known to every body in town, that had ever paid his devotions at that church. He had been ſeen, for ſo long a time, wanting a leg; but recovered that limb by the rubbing of holy oil upon the ſtump; and the cardinal aſſures us that he ſaw him with two legs. This miracle was vouched by all the canons of the church; and the whole company in town were appealed to for a confirmation of the fact; whom the cardinal found, by their zealous devotion, to be thorough believers of the miracle. Here the relater was alſo cotemporary to the ſuppoſed prodigy, of an incredulous and libertine character, as well as of great genius; the miracle of ſo *ſingular* a nature as could ſcarcely admit of a counterfeit, and the witneſſes very numerous, and all of them, in a manner, ſpectators of the fact, to which they gave their teſtimony. And what adds mightily to the force of the evidence, and may double our ſurprize on this occaſion, is, that the cardinal himſelf, who relates the ſtory, ſeems not to give any credit to it, and conſequently cannot be ſuſpected of any concurrence in the holy fraud. He conſidered juſtly, that it was not requiſite, in order to reject a fact of this nature, to be able accurately, to diſprove the teſtimony, and to trace its falſehood, through all the circumſtances of knavery and credulity which produced it. He knew, that, as this was commonly altogether impoſſible at any ſmall diſtance of time and place; ſo was it extremely difficult, even where one was immediately preſent, by reaſon of the bigotry, ignorance, cunning, and roguery of a great part of mankind. He therefore concluded, like a juſt reaſoner, that ſuch an evidence carried falſehood upon the very face of it, and that a miracle, ſupported by any human teſtimony, was more properly a ſubject of deriſion than of argument.

There

There ſurely never was a greater number of miracles aſcribed to one perſon, than thoſe, which were lately ſaid to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of Abbé Paris, the famous Janſeniſt, with whoſe ſanctity the people were ſo long deluded. The curing of the ſick, giving hearing to the deaf, and ſight to the blind, were every where talked of as the uſual effects of that holy ſepulchre. But what is more extraordinary; many of the miracles were immediately proved upon the ſpot, before judges of unqueſtioned integrity, atteſted by witneſſes of credit and diſtinction, in a learned age, and on the moſt eminent theatre that is now in the world. Nor is this all: A relation of them was publiſhed and diſperſed every where; nor were the *Jeſuits*, though a learned body, ſupported by the civil magiſtrate, and determined enemies to thoſe opinions, in whoſe favour the miracles were ſaid to have been wrought, ever able diſtinctly to refute or detect them *. Where ſhall we find ſuch a number of circumſtances, agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And what have we to oppoſe to ſuch a cloud of witneſſes, but the abſolute impoſſibility or miraculous nature of the events, which they relate? And this ſurely, in the eyes of all reaſonable people, will alone be regarded as a ſufficient refutation.

Is the conſequence juſt, becauſe ſome human teſtimony has the utmoſt force and authority in ſome caſes, when it relates the battle of Philippi or Pharſalia for inſtance; that therefore all kinds of teſtimony muſt, in all caſes, have equal force and authority? Suppoſe that the Cæſarean and Pompeian factions had, each of them, claimed the victory in theſe battles, and that the hiſtorians of each party had uniformly aſcribed the advantage to their own ſide; how could mankind, at this diſtance,

* See NOTE [L].

tance, have been able to determine between them? The contrariety is equally ſtrong between the miracles related by Herodotus or Plutarch, and thoſe delivered by Mariana, Bede, or any monkiſh hiſtorian.

The wiſe lend a very academic faith to every report which favours the paſſion of the reporter; whether it magnifies his country, his family, or himſelf, or in any other way ſtrikes in with his natural inclinations and propenſities. But what greater temptation than to appear a miſſionary, a prophet, an ambaſſador from heaven? Who would not encounter many dangers and difficulties, in order to attain ſo ſublime a character? Or if, by the help of vanity and a heated imagination, a man has firſt made a convert of himſelf, and entered ſeriouſly into the deluſion; who ever ſcruples to make uſe of pious frauds, in ſupport of ſo holy and meritorious a cauſe?

The ſmalleſt ſpark may here kindle into the greateſt flame; becauſe the materials are always prepared for it. The *avidum genus auricularum* *, the gazing populace, receive greedily, without examination, whatever ſooths ſuperſtition, and promotes wonder.

How many ſtories of this nature, have, in all ages, been detected and exploded in their infancy? How many more have been celebrated for a time, and have afterwards ſunk into neglect and oblivion? Where ſuch reports, therefore, fly about, the ſolution of the phænomenon is obvious; and we judge in conformity to regular experience and obſervation, when we account for it by the known and natural principles of credulity and deluſion. And ſhall we, rather than have a recourſe to ſo natural a ſolution, allow of a miraculous violation of the moſt eſtabliſhed laws of nature?

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* Lucret.

I need not mention the difficulty of detecting a falsehood in any private or even public history, at the place, where it is said to happen; much more when the scene is removed to ever so small a distance. Even a court of judicature, with all the authority, accuracy, and judgment, which they can employ, find themselves often at a loss to distinguish between truth and falsehood in the most recent actions. But the matter never comes to any issue, if trusted to the common method of altercation and debate and flying rumours; especially when men's passions have taken part on either side.

In the infancy of new religions, the wise and learned commonly esteem the matter too inconsiderable to deserve their attention or regard. And when afterwards they would willingly detect the cheat, in order to undeceive the deluded multitude, the season is now past, and the records and witnesses, which might clear up the matter, have perished beyond recovery.

No means of detection remain, but those which must be drawn from the very testimony itself of the reporters: And these, though always sufficient with the judicious and knowing, are commonly too fine to fall under the comprehension of the vulgar.

Upon the whole, then, it appears, that no testimony for any kind of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, much less to a proof; and that, even supposing it amounted to a proof, it would be opposed by another proof; derived from the very nature of the fact, which it would endeavour to establish. It is experience only, which gives authority to human testimony; and it is the same experience, which assures us of the laws of nature. When, therefore, these two kinds of experience are contrary, we have nothing

thing to do but ſubtract the one from the other, and embrace an opinion, either on one ſide or the other, with that aſſurance which ariſes from the remainder. But according to the principle here explained, this ſubſtraction, with regard to all popular religions, amounts to an entire annihilation; and therefore we may eſtabliſh it as a maxim, that no human teſtimony can have ſuch force as to prove a miracle, and make it a juſt foundation for any ſuch ſyſtem of religion.

I beg the limitations here made may be remarked, when I ſay, that a miracle can never be proved, ſo as to be the foundation of a ſyſtem of religion. For I own, that otherwiſe, there may poſſibly be miracles, or violations of the uſual courſe of nature, of ſuch a kind as to admit of proof from human teſtimony; though, perhaps, it will be impoſſible to find any ſuch in all the records of hiſtory. Thus, ſuppoſe, all authors, in all languages, agree, that, from the firſt of January, 1600, there was a total darkneſs over the whole earth for eight days: Suppoſe that the tradition of this extraordinary event is ſtill ſtrong and lively among the people: That all travellers, who return from foreign countries, bring us accounts of the ſame tradition, without the leaſt variation or contradiction: It is evident, that our preſent philoſophers, inſtead of doubting the fact, ought to receive it as certain, and ought to ſearch for the cauſes whence it might be derived. The decay, corruption, and diſſolution of nature, is an event rendered probable by ſo many analogies, that any phænomenon, which ſeems to have a tendency towards that cataſtrophe, comes within the reach of human teſtimony, if that teſtimony be very extenſive and uniform.

But ſuppoſe, that all the hiſtorians who treat of England, ſhould agree, that, on the firſt of

January

January, 1600, Queen Elizabeth died; that both before and after her death ſhe was ſeen by her phyſicians and the whole court, as is uſual with perſons of her rank; that her ſucceſſor was acknowledged and proclaimed by the parliament; and that, after being interred a month, ſhe again appeared, reſumed the throne, and governed England for three years: I muſt confeſs that I ſhould be ſurprized at the concurrence of ſo many odd circumſtances, but ſhould not have the leaſt inclination to believe ſo miraculous an event. I ſhould not doubt of her pretended death, and of thoſe other public circumſtances that followed it: I ſhould only aſſert it to have been pretended, and that it neither was, nor poſſibly could be real. You would in vain object to me the difficulty, and almoſt impoſſibility of deceiving the world in an affair of ſuch conſequence; the wiſdom and ſolid judgment of that renowned queen; with the little or no advantage which ſhe could reap from ſo poor an artifice: All this might aſtoniſh me; but I would ſtill reply, that the knavery and folly of men are ſuch common phænomena, that I ſhould rather believe the moſt extraordinary events to ariſe from their concurrence, than admit of ſo ſignal a violation of the laws of nature.

But ſhould this miracle be aſcribed to any new ſyſtem of religion; men, in all ages, have been ſo much impoſed on by ridiculous ſtories of that kind, that this very circumſtance would be a full proof of a cheat, and ſufficient, with all men of ſenſe, not only to make them reject the fact, but even reject it without farther examination. Though the Being to whom the miracle is aſcribed, be, in this caſe, Almighty, it does not, upon that account, become a whit more probable; ſince it is impoſſible for us to know

know the attributes or actions of ſuch a Being, otherwiſe than from the experience which we have of his productions, in the uſual courſe of nature. This ſtill reduces us to paſt obſervation, and obliges us to compare the inſtances of the violation of truth in the teſtimony of men, with thoſe of the violation of the laws of nature by miracles, in order to judge which of them is moſt likely and probable. As the violations of truth are more common in the teſtimony concerning religious miracles, than in that concerning any other matter of fact; this muſt diminiſh very much the authority of the former teſtimony, and make us form a general reſolution, never to lend any attention to it, with whatever ſpecious pretence it may be covered.

Lord Bacon ſeems to have embraced the ſame principles of reaſoning. "We ought, ſays he, "to make a collection or particular hiſtory of "all monſters and prodigious births or productions, and in a word of every thing new, rare, "and extraordinary in nature. But this muſt "be done with the moſt ſevere ſcrutiny, leſt "we depart from truth. Above all, every relation muſt be conſidered as ſuſpicious, which "depends in any degree upon religion, as the "prodigies of Livy: And no leſs ſo, every thing "that is to be found in the writers of natural "magic or alchimy, or ſuch authors, who ſeem, "all of them, to have an unconquerable appetite for falſehood and fable *."

I am the better pleaſed with the method of reaſoning here delivered, as I think it may ſerve to confound thoſe dangerous friends or diſguiſed enemies to the *Chriſtian Religion*, who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reaſon. Our moſt holy religion is founded on *Faith*, not on reaſon; and it is a ſure method of expoſing

* Nov. Org. lib. ii. aph. 29.

exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is, by no means, fitted to endure. To make this more evident, let us examine those miracles, related in scripture; and not to lose ourselves in too wide a field, let us confine ourselves to such as we find in the *Pentateuch*, which we shall examine, according to the principles of these pretended Christians, not as the word or testimony of God himself, but as the production of a mere human writer and historian. Here then we are first to consider a book, presented to us by a barbarous and ignorant people, written in an age when they were still more barbarous, and in all probability long after the facts which it relates, corroborated by no concurring testimony, and resembling those fabulous accounts, which every nation gives of its origin. Upon reading this book, we find it full of prodigies and miracles. It gives an account of a state of the world and of human nature entirely different from the present: Of our fall from that state: Of the age of man, extended to near a thousand years: Of the destruction of the world by a deluge: Of the arbitrary choice of one people, as the favourites of heaven; and that people the countrymen of the author: Of their deliverance from bondage by prodigies the most astonishing imaginable: I desire any one to lay his hand upon his heart, and after a serious consideration declare, whether he thinks that the falsehood of such a book, supported by such a testimony, would be more extraordinary and miraculous than all the miracles it relates; which is, however, necessary to make it be received, according to the measures of probability above established.

What we have said of miracles may be applied, without any variation, to prophecies; and indeed,

indeed, all prophecies are real miracles, and as ſuch only, can be admitted as proofs of any revelation. If it did not exceed the capacity of human nature to foretel future events, it would be abſurd to employ any prophecy as an argument for a divine miſſion or authority from heaven. So that, upon the whole, we may conclude, that the *Chriſtian Religion* not only was at firſt attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reaſonable perſon without one. Mere reaſon is inſufficient to convince us of its veracity: And whoever is moved by *Faith* to aſſent to it, is conſcious of a continued miracle in his own perſon, which ſubverts all the principles of his underſtanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is moſt contrary to cuſtom and experience.

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SECTION XI.

Of a PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE and of a FUTURE STATE.

I WAS lately engaged in converſation with a friend who loves ſceptical paradoxes; where, though he advanced many principles, of which I can by no means approve, yet as they ſeem to be curious, and to bear ſome relation to the chain of reaſoning carried on throughout this enquiry, I ſhall here copy them from my memory as accurately as I can, in order to ſubmit them to the judgment of the reader.

Our converſation began with my admiring the ſingular good fortune of philoſophy, which, as it requires entire liberty above all other privileges, and chiefly flouriſhes from the free oppoſition of ſentiments and argumentation, received its firſt birth in an age and country of freedom and toleration, and was never cramped, even in its moſt extravagant principles, by any creeds, confeſſions, or penal ſtatutes. For, except the baniſhment of Protagoras, and the death of Socrates, which laſt event proceeded partly from other motives, there are ſcarcely any inſtances to be met with, in ancient hiſtory, of this bigotted jealouſy, with which the preſent age is ſo much infeſted. Epicurus lived at Athens to an advanced age, in

peace

peace and tranquillity: Epicureans* were even admitted to receive the ſacerdotal character, and to officiate at the altar, in the moſt ſacred rites of the eſtabliſhed religion: And the public encouragement† of penſions and ſalaries was afforded equally, by the wiſeſt of all the Roman emperors‡, to the profeſſors of every ſect of philoſophy. How requiſite ſuch kind of treatment was to philoſophy, in her early youth, will eaſily be conceived, if we reflect, that, even at preſent, when ſhe may be ſuppoſed more hardy and robuſt, ſhe bears with much difficulty the inclemency of the ſeaſons, and thoſe harſh winds of calumny and perſecution, which blow upon her.

You admire, ſays my friend, as the ſingular good fortune of philoſophy, what ſeems to reſult from the natural courſe of things, and to be unavoidable in every age and nation. This pertinacious bigotry, of which you complain, as ſo fatal to philoſophy, is really her offspring, who, after allying with ſuperſtition, ſeparates himſelf entirely from the intereſt of his parent, and becomes her moſt inveterate enemy and perſecutor. Speculative dogmas of religion, the preſent occaſions of ſuch furious diſpute, could not poſſibly be conceived or admitted in the early ages of the world; when mankind, being wholly illiterate, formed an idea of religion more ſuitable to their weak apprehenſion, and compoſed their ſacred tenets of ſuch tales chiefly as were the objects of traditional belief, more than of argument or diſputation. After the firſt alarm, therefore, was over, which aroſe from the new paradoxes and principles of the philoſophers; theſe teachers ſeem ever after, during the ages of antiquity, to have lived in great harmony with the eſtabliſhed

* Luciani συμπ. ἠ, λαπιθαι.
† Luciani ευνυχ☉. ‡ Id. & Dio.

eſtabliſhed ſuperſtition, and to have made a fair partition of mankind between them; the former claiming all the learned and wiſe, the latter poſſeſſing all the vulgar and illiterate.

It ſeems then, ſaid I, that you leave politics entirely out of the queſtion, and never ſuppoſe, that a wiſe magiſtrate can juſtly be jealous of certain tenets of philoſophy, ſuch as thoſe of Epicurus, which, denying a divine exiſtence, and conſequently a providence and a future ſtate, ſeem to looſen, in a great meaſure, the ties of morality, and may be ſuppoſed, for that reaſon, pernicious to the peace of civil ſociety.

I know, replied he, that in fact theſe perſecutions never, in any age, proceeded from calm reaſon, or from experience of the pernicious conſequences of philoſophy; but aroſe entirely from paſſion and prejudice. But what if I ſhould advance farther, and aſſert, that, if Epicurus had been accuſed before the people, by any of the *ſycophants* or informers of thoſe days, he could eaſily have defended his cauſe, and proved his principles of philoſophy to be as ſalutary as thoſe of his adverſaries, who endeavoured, with ſuch zeal, to expoſe him to the public hatred and jealouſy?

I wiſh, ſaid I, you would try your eloquence upon ſo extraordinary a topic, and make a ſpeech for Epicurus, which might ſatisfy, not the mob of Athens, if you will allow that ancient and polite city to have contained any mob, but the more philoſophical part of his audience, ſuch as might be ſuppoſed capable of comprehending his arguments.

The matter would not be difficult, upon ſuch conditions, replied he: And if you pleaſe, I ſhall ſuppoſe myſelf Epicurus for a moment, and make you ſtand for the Athenian people, and ſhall deliver you ſuch an harangue as will fill the urn with

with white beans, and leave not a black one to gratify the malice of my adverſaries.

Very well! Pray proceed upon theſe ſuppoſitions.

I come hither, O ye Athenians, to juſtify in your aſſembly what I maintained in my ſchool, and I find myſelf impeached by furious antagoniſts, inſtead of reaſoning with calm and diſpaſſionate enquirers. Your deliberations, which of right ſhould be directed to queſtions of public good, and the intereſt of the commonwealth, are diverted to the diſquiſitions of ſpeculative philoſophy; and theſe magnificent, but perhaps fruitleſs enquiries, take place of your more familiar but more uſeful occupations. But ſo far as in me lies, I will prevent this abuſe. We ſhall not here diſpute concerning the origin and government of worlds. We ſhall only enquire how far ſuch queſtions concern the public intereſt. And if I can perſuade you, that they are entirely indifferent to the peace of ſociety and ſecurity of government, I hope that you will preſently ſend us back to our ſchools, there to examine, at leiſure, the queſtion, the moſt ſublime, but, at the ſame time, the moſt ſpeculative of all philoſophy.

The religious philoſophers, not ſatisfied with the tradition of your forefathers, and doctrine of your prieſts (in which I willingly acquieſce), indulge a raſh curioſity, in trying how far they can eſtabliſh religion upon the principles of reaſon; and they thereby excite, inſtead of ſatisfying, the doubts, which naturally ariſe from a diligent and ſcrutinous enquiry. They paint, in the moſt magnificent colours, the order, beauty, and wiſe arrangement of the univerſe; and then aſk, if ſuch a glorious diſplay of intelligence could proceed from the fortuitous concourſe of atoms, or if chance could produce what the greateſt genius can never ſufficiently admire. I ſhall not

examine the juſtneſs of this argument. I ſhall allow it to be as ſolid as my antagoniſts and accuſers can deſire. It is ſufficient, if I can prove, from this very reaſoning, that the queſtion is entirely ſpeculative, and that, when, in my philoſophical diſquiſitions, I deny a providence and a future ſtate, I undermine not the foundations of ſociety, but advance principles, which they themſelves, upon their own topics, if they argue conſiſtently, muſt allow to be ſolid and ſatisfactory.

You then, who are my accuſers, have acknowledged, that the chief or ſole argument for a divine exiſtence (which I never queſtioned) is derived from the order of nature; where there appear ſuch marks of intelligence and deſign, that you think it extravagant to aſſign for its cauſe, either chance, or the blind and unguided force of matter. You allow, that this is an argument drawn from effects to cauſes. From the order of the work, you infer, that there muſt have been project and forethought in the workman. If you cannot make out this point, you allow, that your concluſion fails; and you pretend not to eſtabliſh the concluſion in a greater latitude than the phænomena of nature will juſtify. Theſe are your conceſſions. I deſire you to mark the conſequences.

When we infer any particular cauſe from an effect, we muſt proportion the one to the other, and can never be allowed to aſcribe to the cauſe any qualities, but what are exactly ſufficient to produce the effect. A body of ten ounces raiſed in a ſcale may ſerve as a proof, that the counterbalancing weight exceeds ten ounces; but can never afford a reaſon that it exceeds a hundred. If the cauſe, aſſigned for any effect, be not ſufficient to produce it, we muſt either reject that cauſe, or add to it ſuch qualities as will give it a juſt proportion to the effect. But if we

afcribe to it farther qualities, or affirm it capable of producing other effects, we can only indulge the licence of conjecture, and arbitrarily fuppofe the exiftence of qualities and energies, without reafon or authority.

The fame rule holds, whether the caufe affigned be brute unconfcious matter, or rational intelligent being. If the caufe be known only by the effect, we never ought to afcribe to it any qualities, beyond what are precifely requifite to produce the effect: Nor can we, by any rules of juft reafoning, return back from the caufe, and infer other effects from it, beyond thofe by which alone it is known to us. No one, merely from the fight of one of Zeuxis's pictures, could know, that he was alfo a ftatuary or architect, and was an artift no lefs fkilful in ftone and marble than in colours. The talents and tafte, difplayed in the particular work before us; thefe we may fafely conclude the workman to be poffeffed of. The caufe muft be proportioned to the effect; and if we exactly and precifely proportion it, we fhall never find in it any qualities, that point farther, or afford an inference concerning any other defign or performance. Such qualities muft be fomewhat beyond what is merely requifite for producing the effect, which we examine.

Allowing, therefore, the gods to be the authors of the exiftence or order of the univerfe; it follows, that they poffefs that precife degree of power, intelligence, and benovelence, which appears in their workmanfhip; but nothing farther can ever be proved, except we call in the affiftance of exaggeration and flattery to fupply the defects of argument and reafoning. So far as the traces of any attributes, at prefent, appear, fo far may we conclude thefe attributes to exift. The fuppofition of farther attributes is mere hypothefis;

pothesis; much more the supposition, that, in distant regions of space or periods of time, there has been, or will be, a more magnificent display of these attributes, and a scheme of administration more suitable to such imaginary virtues. We can never be allowed to mount up from the universe, the effect, to Jupiter, the cause; and then descend downwards, to infer any new effect from that cause; as if the present effects alone were not entirely worthy of the glorious attributes, which we ascribe to that deity. The knowledge of the cause being derived solely from the effect, they must be exactly adjusted to each other; and the one can never refer to any thing farther, or be the foundation of any new inference and conclusion.

You find certain phænomena in nature. You seek a cause or author. You imagine that you have found him. You afterwards become so enamoured of this offspring of your brain, that you imagine it impossible, but he must produce something greater and more perfect than the present scene of things, which is so full of ill and disorder. You forget, that this superlative intelligence and benevolence are entirely imaginary, or, at least, without any foundation in reason; and that you have no ground to ascribe to him any qualities, but what you see he has actually exerted and displayed in his productions. Let your gods, therefore, O philosophers, be suited to the present appearances by arbitarry suppositions, in order to suit them to the attributes, which you so fondly ascribe to your deities.

When priests and poets, supported by your authority, O Athenians, talk of a golden or silver age, which preceded the present state of vice and misery, I hear them with attention and with reverence. But when philosophers, who pretend to neglect authority, and to cultivate reason, hold

the ſame diſcourſe, I pay them not, I own, the ſame obſequious ſubmiſſion and pious deference. I aſk; who carried them into the councils of the gods, who opened to them the book of fate, that they thus raſhly affirm, that their deities have executed, or will execute, any purpoſe beyond what has actually appeared? If they tell me, that they have mounted on the ſteps or by the gradual aſcent of reaſon, and by drawing inferences from effects to cauſes, I ſtill inſiſt, that they have aided the aſcent of reaſon by the wings of imagination; otherwiſe they could not thus change their manner of inference, and argue from cauſes to effects; preſuming, that a more perfect production than the preſent world would be more ſuitable to ſuch perfect beings as the gods, and forgetting that they have no reaſon to aſcribe to theſe celeſtial beings any perfection or any attribute, but what can be found in the preſent world.

Hence all the fruitleſs induſtry to account for the ill appearances of nature, and ſave the honour of the gods; while we muſt acknowledge the reality of that evil and diſorder, with which the world ſo much abounds. The obſtinate and intractable qualities of matter, we are told, or the obſervance of general laws, or ſome ſuch reaſon, is the ſole cauſe, which controlled the power and benevolence of Jupiter, and obliged him to create mankind and every ſenſible creature ſo imperfect and ſo unhappy. Theſe attributes, then, are, it ſeems, beforehand, taken for granted, in their greateſt latitude. And upon that ſuppoſition, I own, that ſuch conjectures may, perhaps, be admitted as plauſible ſolutions of the ill phænomena. But ſtill I aſk; Why take theſe attributes for granted, or why aſcribe to the cauſe any qualities but what actually appear in the effect? Why torture your brain to juſtify the courſe

of

of nature upon ſuppoſitions, which, for aught you know, may be entirely imaginary, and of which there are to be found no traces in the courſe ofnature?

The religious hypotheſis, therefore, muſt be conſidered only as a particular method of accounting for the viſible phænomena of the univerſe: But no juſt reaſoner will ever preſume to infer from it any ſingle fact, and alter or add to the phænomena, in any ſingle particular. If you think, that the appearances of things prove ſuch cauſes, it is allowable for you to draw an inference concerning the exiſtence of theſe cauſes. In ſuch complicated and ſublime ſubjects, every one ſhould be indulged in the liberty of conjecture and argument. But here you ought to reſt. If you come backward, and arguing from your inferred cauſes, conclude, that any other fact has exiſted, or will exiſt, in the courſe of nature, which may ſerve as a fuller diſplay of particular attributes; I muſt admoniſh you, that you have departed from the method of reaſoning, attached to the preſent ſubject, and have certainly added ſomething to the attributes of the cauſe, beyond what appears in the effect; otherwiſe you could never, with tolerable ſenſe or propriety, add any thing to the effect, in order to render it more worthy of the cauſe.

Where, then, is the odiouſneſs of that doctrine, which I teach in my ſchool, or rather, which I examine in my gardens? Or what do you find in this whole queſtion, wherein the ſecurity of good morals, or the peace and order of ſociety is in the leaſt concerned?

I deny a providence, you ſay, and ſupreme governour of the world, who guides the courſe of events, and puniſhes the vicious with infamy and diſappointment, and rewards the virtuous with honour and ſucceſs, in all their undertakings. But ſurely, I deny not the courſe itſelf of events, which lies open to every one's enquiry and examination.

mination. I acknowledge, that, in the present order of things, virtue is attended with more peace of mind than vice, and meets with a more favourable reception from the world. I am sensible, that, according to the past experience of mankind, friendship is the chief joy of human life, and moderation the only source of tranquillity and happiness. I never balance between the virtuous and vicious course of life; but am sensible, that to a well disposed mind, every advantage is on the side of the former. And what can you say more, allowing all your suppositions and reasonings? You tell me, indeed, that this disposition of things proceeds from intelligence and design. But whatever it proceeds from, the disposition itself, on which depends our happiness or misery, and consequently our conduct and deportment in life, is still the same. It is still open for me, as well as you, to regulate my behaviour, by my experience of past events. And if you affirm, that, while a divine providence is allowed, and a supreme distributive justice in the universe, I ought to expect some more particular reward of the good, and punishment of the bad, beyond the ordinary course of events; I here find the same fallacy, which I have before endeavoured to detect. You persist in imagining, that, if we grant that divine existence, for which you so earnestly contend, you may safely infer consequences from it, and add something to the experienced order of nature, by arguing from the attributes which you ascribe to your gods. You seem not to remember, that all your reasonings on this subject can only be drawn from effects to causes; and that every argument, deduced from causes to effects, must of necessity be a gross sophism; since it is impossible for you to know any thing of the cause, but what you have antecedently, not inferred, but discovered to the full, in the effect.

But

But what muſt a philoſopher think of thoſe vain reaſoners, who, inſtead of regarding the preſent ſcene of things as the ſole object of their contemplation, ſo far reverſe the whole courſe of nature, as to render this life merely a paſſage to ſomething farther; a porch, which leads to a greater, and vaſtly different building; a prologue, which ſerves only to introduce the piece, and give it more grace and propriety? Whence, do you think, can ſuch philoſophers derive their idea of the gods? From their own conceit and imagination ſurely. For if they derived it from the preſent phænomena, it would never point to any thing farther, but muſt be exactly adjuſted to them. That the divinity may *poſſibly* be endowed with attributes, which we have never ſeen exerted; may be governed by principles of action, which we cannot diſcover to be ſatisfied: All this will freely be allowed. But ſtill this is mere *poſſibility* and hypotheſis. We never can have reaſon to *infer* any attributes, or any principles of action in him, but ſo far as we know them to have been exerted and ſatisfied.

Are there any marks of a diſtributive juſtice in the world? If you anſwer in the affirmative, I conclude, that, ſince juſtice here exerts itſelf, it is ſatisfied. If you reply in the negative, I conclude, that you have then no reaſon to aſcribe juſtice, in our ſenſe of it, to the gods. If you hold a medium between affirmation and negation, by ſaying, that the juſtice of the gods, at preſent, exerts itſelf in part, but not in its full extent; I anſwer, that you have no reaſon to give it any particular extent, but only ſo far as you ſee it, *at preſent*, exert itſelf.

Thus I bring the diſpute, O Athenians, to a ſhort iſſue with my antagoniſts. The courſe of nature lies open to my contemplation as well as to theirs. The experienced train of events is the great

great ſtandard, by which we all regulate our conduct. Nothing elſe can be appealed to in the field, or in the ſenate. Nothing elſe ought ever to be heard of in the ſchool, or in the cloſet. In vain would our limited underſtanding break through thoſe boundaries, which are too narrow for our fond imagination. While we argue from the courſe of nature, and infer a particular intelligent cauſe, which firſt beſtowed, and ſtill preſerves order in the univerſe, we embrace a principle, which is both uncertain and uſeleſs. It is uncertain; becauſe the ſubject lies entirely beyond the reach of human experience. It is uſeleſs; becauſe our knowledge of this cauſe being derived entirely from the courſe of nature, we can never, according to the rules of juſt reaſoning, return back from the cauſe with any new inference, or making additions to the common and experienced courſe of nature, eſtabliſh any new principles of conduct and behaviour.

I obſerve (ſaid I, finding he had finiſhed his harangue) that you neglect not the artifice of the demagogues of old; and as you were pleaſed to make me ſtand for the people, you inſinuate yourſelf into my favour by embracing thoſe principles, to which, you know, I have always expreſſed a particular attachment. But allowing you to make experience (as indeed I think you ought) the only ſtandard of our judgment concerning this, and all other queſtions of fact; I doubt not but, from the very ſame experience, to which you appeal, it may be poſſible to refute this reaſoning, which you have put into the mouth of Epicurus. If you ſaw, for inſtance, a half-finiſhed building, ſurrounded with heaps of brick and ſtone and mortar, and all the inſtruments of maſonry; could you not *infer* from the effect, that it was a work of deſign and contrivance? And could you not return again, from this inferred cauſe, to infer

new

new additions to the effect, and conclude, that the building would soon be finished, and receive all the further improvements, which art could bestow upon it? If you saw upon the sea-shore the print of one human foot, you would conclude, that a man had passed that way, and that he had also left the traces of the other foot, though effaced by the rolling of the sands or inundation of the waters. Why then do you refuse to admit the same method of reasoning with regard to the order of nature? Consider the world and the present life only as an imperfect building, from which you can infer a superior intelligence; and arguing from that superior intelligence, which can leave nothing imperfect; why may you not infer a more finished scheme or plan, which will receive its completion in some distant point of space or time? Are not these methods of reasoning exactly similar? And under what pretence can you embrace the one, while you reject the other?

The infinite difference of the subjects, replied he, is a sufficient foundation for this difference in my conclusions. In works of *human* art and contrivance, it is allowable to advance from the effect to the cause, and returning back from the cause, to form new inferences concerning the effect, and examine the alterations, which it has probably undergone, or may still undergo. But what is the foundation of this method of reasoning? Plainly this; that man is a being, whom we know by experience, whose motives and designs we are acquainted with, and whose projects and inclinations have a certain connexion and coherence, according to the laws which nature has established for the government of such a creature. When, therefore, we find, that any work has proceeded from the skill and industry of man; as we are otherwise acquainted with the nature of the animal, we can draw a hundred inferences concerning what

what may be expected from him; and these inferences will all be founded in experience and observation. But did we know man only from the single work or production which we examine, it were impossible for us to argue in this manner; because our knowledge of all the qualities, which we ascribe to him, being in that case derived from the production, it is impossible they could point to any thing farther, or be the foundation of any new inference. The print of a foot in the sand can only prove, when considered alone, that there was some figure adapted to it, by which it was produced: But the print of a human foot proves likewise, from our other experience, that there was probably another foot, which also left its impression, though effaced by time or other accidents. Here we mount from the effect to the cause; and descending again from the cause, infer alterations in the effect; but this is not a continuation of the same simple chain of reasoning. We comprehend in this case a hundred other experiences and observations, concerning the *usual* figure and members of that species of animal, without which this method of argument must be considered as fallacious and sophistical.

The case is not the same with our reasonings from the works of nature. The Deity is known to us only by his productions, and is a single being in the universe, not comprehended under any species or genus, from whose experienced attributes or qualities, we can, by analogy, infer any attribute or quality in him. As the universe shews wisdom and goodness, we infer wisdom and goodness. As it shews a particular degree of these perfections, we infer a particular degree of them, precisely adapted to the effect which we examine. But farther attributes or farther degrees of the same attributes we can never be authorised to infer or suppose, by any

rules

rules of juſt reaſoning. Now, without ſome ſuch licence of ſuppoſition, it is impoſſible for us to argue from the cauſe, or infer any alteration in the effect, beyond what has immediately fallen under our obſervation. Greater good produced by this Being muſt ſtill prove a greater degree of goodneſs: A more impartial diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments muſt proceed from a greater regard to juſtice and equity. Every ſuppoſed addition to the works of nature makes an addition to the attributes of the Author of nature; and conſequently, being entirely unſupported by any reaſon or argument, can never be admitted but as mere conjecture and hypotheſis *.

The great ſource of our miſtake in this ſubject, and of the unbounded licence of conjecture, which we indulge, is, that we tacitly conſider ourſelves, as in the place of the Supreme Being, and conclude, that he will, on every occaſion, obſerve the ſame conduct, which we ourſelves, in his ſituation, would have embraced as reaſonable and eligible. But, beſides that the ordinary courſe of nature may convince us, that almoſt every thing is regulated by principles and maxims very different from ours; beſides this, I ſay, it muſt evidently appear contrary to all rules of analogy to reaſon, from the intentions and projects of men, to thoſe of a Being ſo different, and ſo much ſuperior. In human nature, there is a certain experienced coherence of deſigns and inclinations; ſo that when, from any fact, we have diſcovered one intention of any man, it may often be reaſonable, from experience, to infer another, and draw a long chain of concluſions concerning his paſt or future conduct. But this method of reaſoning can never have place with

* See NOTE [M].

with regard to a Being, ſo remote and incomprehenſible, who bears much leſs analogy to any other being in the univerſe than the ſun to a waxen taper, and who diſcovers himſelf only by ſome faint traces or outlines, beyond which we have no authority to aſcribe to him any attribute or perfection. What we imagine to be a ſuperior perfection, may really be a defect. Or were it ever ſo much a perfection, the aſcribing of it to the Supreme Being, where it appears not to have been really exerted, to the full, in his works, ſavours more of flattery and panegyric, than of juſt reaſoning and ſound philoſophy. All the philoſophy, therefore, in the world, and all the religion, which is nothing but a ſpecies of philoſophy, will never be able to carry us beyond the uſual courſe of experience, or give us meaſures of conduct and behaviour different from thoſe which are furniſhed by reflections on common life. No new fact can ever be inferred from the religious hypotheſis; no event foreſeen or foretold; no reward or puniſhment expected or dreaded, beyond what is already known by practice and obſervation. So that my apology for Epicurus will ſtill appear ſolid and ſatisfactory; nor have the political intereſts of ſociety any connexion with the philoſophical diſputes concerning metaphyſics and religion.

There is ſtill one circumſtance, replied I, which you ſeem to have overlooked. Though I ſhould allow your premiſes, I muſt deny your concluſion. You conclude, that religious doctines and reaſonings *can* have no influence on life, becauſe they *ought* to have no influence: never conſidering, that men reaſon not in the ſame manner you do, but draw many conſequences from the belief of a divine Exiſtence, and ſuppoſe that the Deity will inflict puniſhments on vice, and beſtow rewards on virtue, beyond what appear in the ordinary courſe of nature. Whether this reaſoning of

of theirs be juſt or not, is no matter. Its influence on their life and conduct muſt ſtill be the ſame. And, thoſe, who attempt to diſabuſe them of ſuch prejudices, may, for aught I know, be good reaſoners, but I cannot allow them to be good citizens and politicians; ſince they free men from one reſtraint upon their paſſions, and make the infringement of the laws of ſociety, in one reſpect, more eaſy and ſecure.

After all, I may, perhaps, agree to your general concluſion in favour of liberty, though upon different premiſes from thoſe, on which you endeavour to found it. I think, that the ſtate ought to tolerate every principle of philoſophy; nor is there an inſtance, that any government has ſuffered in its political intereſts by ſuch indulgence. There is no enthuſiaſm among philoſophers; their doctrines are not very alluring to the people; and no reſtraint can be put upon their reaſonings, but what muſt be of dangerous conſequence to the ſciences, and even to the ſtate, by paving the way for perſecution and oppreſſion in points, where the generality of mankind are more deeply intereſted and concerned.

But there occurs to me (continued I) with regard to your main topic, a difficulty, which I ſhall juſt propoſe to you, without inſiſting on it; leſt it lead into reaſonings of too nice and delicate a nature. In a word, I much doubt whether it be poſſible for a cauſe to be known only by its effect (as you have all along ſuppoſed) or to be of ſo ſingular and particular a nature as to have no parallel and no ſimilarity with any other cauſe or object, that has ever fallen under our obſervation. It is only when two *ſpecies* of objects are found to be conſtantly conjoined, that we can infer the one from the other; and were an effect preſented, which was entirely ſingular, and could not be comprehended under any known *ſpecies*, I do not ſee, that we could form

form any conjecture or inference at all concerning its cause. If experience and observation and analogy be, indeed, the only guides which we can reasonably follow in inferences of this nature; both the effect and cause must bear a similarity and resemblance to other effects and causes, which we know, and which we have found, in many instances, to be conjoined with each other. I leave it to your own reflection to pursue the consequences of this principle. I shall just observe, that, as the antagonists of Epicurus always suppose the universe, an effect quite singular and unparalleled, to be the proof of a Deity, a cause no less singular and unparalleled; your reasonings, upon that supposition, seem, at least, to merit our attention. There is, I own, some difficulty, how we can ever return from the cause to the effect, and, reasoning from our ideas of the former, infer any alteration on the latter, or any addition to it.

SECTION XII.

Of the ACADEMICAL or SCEPTICAL PHILOSOPHY.

PART I.

THERE is not a greater number of philoſophical reaſonings, diſplayed upon any ſubject, than thoſe, which prove the exiſtence of a Deity, and refute the fallacies of *Atheiſts*; and yet the moſt religious philoſophers ſtill diſpute whether any man can be ſo blinded as to be a ſpeculative atheiſt. How ſhall we reconcile theſe contradictions? The knights-errant, who wandered about to clear the world of dragons and giants, never entertained the leaſt doubt with regard to the exiſtence of theſe monſters.

The *Sceptic* is another enemy of religion, who naturally provokes the indignation of all divines and graver philoſophers; though it is certain, that no man ever met with any ſuch abſurd creature, or converſed with a man, who had no opinion or principle concerning any ſubject, either of action or ſpeculation. This begets a very natural queſtion; What is meant by a ſceptic? And how far it is poſſible to puſh theſe philoſophical principles of doubt and uncertainty?

There

There is a ſpecies of ſcepticiſm, *antecedent* to all ſtudy and philoſophy, which is much inculcated by Des Cartes and others, as a ſovereign preſervative againſt error and precipitate judgment. It recommends an univerſal doubt, not only of all our former opinions and principles, but alſo of our very faculties; of whoſe veracity, ſay they, we muſt aſſure ourſelves, by a chain of reaſoning, deduced from ſome original principle, which cannot poſſibly be fallacious or deceitful. But neither is there any ſuch original principle, which has a prerogative above others, that are ſelf-evident and convincing: Or if there were, could we advance a ſtep beyond it, but by the uſe of thoſe very faculties, of which we are ſuppoſed to be already diffident. The Carteſian doubt, therefore, were it ever poſſible to be attained by any human creature (as it plainly is not) would be entirely incurable; and no reaſoning could ever bring us to a ſtate of aſſurance and conviction upon any ſubject.

It muſt, however, be confeſſed, that this ſpecies of ſcepticiſm, when more moderate, may be underſtood in a very reaſonable ſenſe, and is a neceſſary preparative to the ſtudy of philoſophy, by preſerving a proper impartiality in our judgments, and weaning our mind from all thoſe prejudices, which we may have imbibed from education or raſh opinion. To begin with clear and ſelf-evident principles, to advance by timorous and ſure ſteps, to review frequently our concluſions, and examine accurately all their conſequences; though by theſe means we ſhall make both a ſlow and a ſhort progreſs in our ſyſtems; are the only methods, by which we can ever hope to reach truth, and attain a proper ſtability and certainty in our determinations.

There is another ſpecies of ſcepticiſm, *conſequent* to ſcience and enquiry, when men are ſuppoſed to have diſcovered, either the abſolute fal-

laciousness of their mental faculties, or their unfitness to reach any fixed determination in all those curious subjects of speculation, about which they are commonly employed. Even our very senses are brought into dispute, by a certain species of philosophers; and the maxims of common life are subjected to the same doubt as the most profound principles or conclusions of metaphysics and theology. As these paradoxical tenets (if they may be called tenets) are to be met with in some philosophers, and the refutation of them in several, they naturally excite our curiosity, and make us enquire into the arguments, on which they may be founded.

I need not insist upon the more trite topics, employed by the sceptics in all ages, against the evidence of *sense*; such as those which are derived from the imperfection and fallaciousness of our organs, on numberless occasions; the crooked appearance of an oar in water; the various aspects of objects, according to their different distances; the double images which arise from the pressing one eye; with many other appearances of a like nature. These sceptical topics, indeed, are only sufficient to prove, that the senses alone are not implicitly to be depended on; but that we must correct their evidence by reason, and by considerations, derived from the nature of the medium, the distance of the object, and the disposition of the organ, in order to render them, within their sphere, the proper *criteria* of truth and falsehood. There are other more profound arguments against the senses, which admit not of so easy a solution.

It seems evident, that men are carried, by a natural instinct or prepossession, to repose faith in their senses; and that, without any reasoning, or even almost before the use of reason, we always suppose an external universe, which depends not on our

our perception, but would exiſt, though we and every ſenſible creature were abſent or annihilated. Even the animal creation are governed by a like opinion, and preſerve this belief of external objects, in all their thoughts, deſigns, and actions.

It ſeems alſo evident, that, when men follow this blind and powerful inſtinct of nature, they always ſuppoſe the very images, preſented by the ſenſes, to be the external objects, and never entertain any ſuſpicion, that the one are nothing but repreſentations of the other. This very table, which we ſee white, and which we feel hard, is believed to exiſt, independent of our perception, and to be ſomething external to our mind, which perceives it. Our preſence beſtows not being on it: Our abſence does not annihilate it. It preſerves its exiſtence uniform and entire, independent of the ſituation of intelligent beings, who perceive or contemplate it.

But this univerſal and primary opinion of all men is ſoon deſtroyed by the ſlighteſt philoſophy, which teaches us, that nothing can ever be preſent to the mind but an image or perception, and that the ſenſes are only the inlets, through which theſe images are conveyed, without being able to produce any immediate intercourſe between the mind and the object. The table, which we ſee, ſeems to diminiſh, as we remove farther from it: But the real table, which exiſts independent of us, ſuffers no alteration: It was, therefore, nothing but its image, which was preſent to the mind. Theſe are the obvious dictates of reaſon; and no man, who reflects, ever doubted, that the exiſtences, which we conſider, when we ſay, *this houſe* and *that tree*, are nothing but perceptions in the mind, and fleeting copies or repreſentations of other exiſtences, which remain uniform and independent.

So

So far, then, are we neceſſitated by reaſoning to contradict or depart from the primary inſtincts of nature, and to embrace a new ſyſtem with regard to the evidence of our ſenſes. But here philoſophy finds herſelf extremely embarraſſed, when ſhe would juſtify this new ſyſtem, and obviate the cavils and objections of the ſceptics. She can no longer plead the infallible and irreſiſtible inſtinct of nature: For that led us to a quite different ſyſtem, which is acknowledged fallible and even erroneous. And to juſtify this pretended philoſophical ſyſtem, by a chain of clear and convincing argument, or even any appearance of argument, exceeds the power of all human capacity.

By what argument can it be proved, that the perceptions of the mind muſt be cauſed by external objects, entirely different from them, though reſembling them (if that be poſſible) and could not ariſe either from the energy of the mind itſelf, or from the ſuggeſtion of ſome inviſible and unknown ſpirit, or from ſome other cauſe ſtill more unknown to us? It is acknowledged, that, in fact, many of theſe perceptions ariſe not from any thing external, as in dreams, madneſs, and other diſeaſes. And nothing can be more inexplicable than the manner, in which body ſhould ſo operate upon mind as ever to convey an image of itſelf to a ſubſtance, ſuppoſed of ſo different, and even contrary a nature.

It is a queſtion of fact, whether the perceptions of the ſenſes be produced by external objects, reſembling them: How ſhall this queſtion be determined? By experience ſurely; as all other queſtions of a like nature. But here experience is, and muſt be entirely ſilent. The mind has never any thing preſent to it but the perceptions, and cannot poſſibly reach any experience of their connexion with objects. The ſuppoſition of

of ſuch a connexion is, therefore, without any foundation in reaſoning.

To have recourſe to the veracity of the Supreme Being, in order to prove the veracity of our ſenſes, is ſurely making a very unexpected circuit. If his veracity were at all concerned in this matter, our ſenſes would be entirely infallible; becauſe it is not poſſible that he can ever deceive. Not to mention, that, if the external world be once called in queſtion, we ſhall be at a loſs to find arguments, by which we may prove the exiſtence of that Being or any of his attributes.

This is a topic, therefore, in which the profounder and more philoſophical ſceptics will always triumph, when they endeavour to introduce an univerſal doubt into all ſubjects of human knowledge and enquiry. Do you follow the inſtincts and propenſities of nature, may they ſay, in aſſenting to the veracity of ſenſe? But theſe lead you to believe, that the very perception or ſenſible image is the external object. Do you diſclaim this principle, in order to embrace a more rational opinion, that the perceptions are only repreſentations of ſomething external? You here depart from your natural propenſities and more obvious ſentiments; and yet are not able to ſatisfy your reaſon, which can never find any convincing argument from experience to prove, that the perceptions are connected with any external objects.

There is another ſceptical topic of a like nature, derived from the moſt profound philoſophy; which might merit our attention, were it requiſite to dive ſo deep, in order to diſcover arguments and reaſonings, which can ſo little ſerve to any ſerious purpoſe. It is univerſally allowed by modern enquirers, that all the ſenſible qualities of objects,

jects, ſuch as hard, ſoft, hot, cold, white, black, *&c.* are merely ſecondary, and exiſt not in the objects themſelves, but are perceptions of the mind, without any external archetype or model, which they repreſent. If this be allowed, with regard to ſecondary qualities, it muſt alſo follow, with regard to the ſuppoſed primary qualities of extenſion and ſolidity; nor can the latter be any more entitled to that denomination than the former. The idea of extenſion is entirely acquired from the ſenſes of ſight and feeling; and if all the qualities, perceived by the ſenſes, be in the mind, not in the object, the ſame concluſion muſt reach the idea of extenſion, which is wholly dependent on the ſenſible ideas or the ideas of ſecondary qualities. Nothing can ſave us from this concluſion, but the aſſerting, that the ideas of thoſe primary qualities are attained by *Abſtraction*, an opinion, which, if we examine it accurately, we ſhall find to be unintelligible, and even abſurd. An extenſion, that is neither tangible nor viſible, cannot poſſibly be conceived: And a tangible or viſible extenſion, which is neither hard nor ſoft, black nor white, is equally beyond the reach of human conception. Let any man try to conceive a triangle in general, which is neither *Iſoceles* nor *Scalenum*, nor has any particular length or proportion of ſides; and he will ſoon perceive the abſurdity of all the ſcholaſtic notions with regard to abſtraction and general ideas *.

Thus the firſt philoſophical objection to the evidence of ſenſe or to the opinion of external exiſtence conſiſts in this, that ſuch an opinion, if reſted on natural inſtinct, is contrary to reaſon, and if referred to reaſon, is contrary to natural inſtinct, and at the ſame time carries no rational evidence with it, to convince an impartial enquirer. The ſecond

* See NOTE [N].

ſecond objection goes farther, and repreſents this opinion as contrary to reaſon: at leaſt, if it be a principle of reaſon, that all ſenſible qualities are in the mind, not in the object. Bereave matter of all its intelligible qualities, both primary and ſecondary, you in a manner annihilate it, and leave only a certain unknown, inexplicable *ſomething*, as the cauſe of our perceptions; a notion ſo imperfect, that no ſceptic will think it worth while to contend againſt it.

PART II.

It may ſeem a very extravagant attempt of the ſceptics to deſtroy *reaſon* by argument and ratiocination; yet is this the grand ſcope of all their enquiries and diſputes. They endeavour to find objections, both to our abſtract reaſonings, and to thoſe which regard matter of fact and exiſtence.

The chief objection againſt all *abſtract* reaſonings is derived from the ideas of ſpace and time; ideas, which, in common life and to a careleſs view, are very clear and intelligible, but when they paſs through the ſcrutiny of the profound ſciences (and they are the chief object of theſe ſciences) afford principles, which ſeem full of abſurdity and contradiction. No prieſtly *dogmas*, invented on purpoſe to tame and ſubdue the rebellious reaſon of mankind, ever ſhocked common ſenſe more than the doctrine of the infinite diviſibility of extenſion, with its conſequences; as they are pompouſly diſplayed by all geometricians and metaphyſicians, with a kind of triumph and exultation. A real quantity, infinitely leſs than itſelf, and ſo on *in infinitum*; this is an edifice ſo bold and prodigious, that it is too weighty for any pretended demonſtration to ſupport, becauſe it ſhocks the cleareſt and moſt natural

principles

principles of human reaſon *. But what renders the matter more extraordinary, is, that theſe ſeemingly abſurd opinions are ſupported by a chain of reaſoning, the cleareſt and moſt natural; nor is it poſſible for us to allow the premiſes without admitting the conſequences. Nothing can be more convincing and ſatisfactory than all the concluſions concerning the properties of circles and triangles; and yet, when theſe are once received, how can we deny, that the angle of contact between a circle and its tangent is infinitely leſs than any rectilineal angle, that as you may encreaſe the diameter of the circle *in infinitum*, this angle of contact becomes ſtill leſs, even *in infinitum*, and that the angle of contact between other curves and their tangents may be infinitely leſs than thoſe between any circle and its tangent, and ſo on, *in infinitum?* The demonſtration of theſe principles ſeems as unexceptionable as that which proves the three angles of a triangle to be equal to two right ones, though the latter opinion be natural and eaſy, and the former big with contradiction and abſurdity. Reaſon here ſeems to be thrown into a kind of amazement and ſuſpenſe, which, without the ſuggeſtions of any ſceptic, gives her a diffidence of herſelf, and of the ground on which ſhe treads. She ſees a full light, which illuminates certain places; but that light borders upon the moſt profound darkneſs. And between theſe ſhe is ſo dazzled and confounded, that ſhe ſcarcely can pronounce with certainty and aſſurance concerning any one object.

The abſurdity of theſe bold determinations of the abſtract ſciences ſeems to become, if poſſible, ſtill more palpable with regard to time than extenſion. An infinite number of real parts of time, paſſing in ſucceſſion, and exhauſted one after another, appears ſo evident a contradiction, that no man, one ſhould think, whoſe judgment is not corrupted, inſtead of being improved, by the ſciences, would ever be able to admit of it.

Yet

† See NOTE [O].

Yet ſtill reaſon muſt remain reſtleſs, and unquiet, even with regard to that ſcepticiſm, to which ſhe is driven by theſe ſeeming abſurdities and contradictions. How any clear, diſtinct idea can contain circumſtances, contradictory to itſelf, or to any other clear, diſtinct idea, is abſolutely incomprehenſible; and is, perhaps, as abſurd as any propoſition, which can be formed. So that nothing can be more ſceptical, or more full of doubt and heſitation, than this ſcepticiſm itſelf, which ariſes from ſome of the paradoxical concluſions of geometry or the ſcience of quantity *.

The ſceptical objections to *moral* evidence, or to the reaſonings concerning matter of fact, are either *popular* or *philoſophical.* The popular objections are derived from the natural weakneſs of human underſtanding; the contradictory opinions, which have been entertained in different ages and nations; the variations of our judgment in ſickneſs and health, youth and old age, proſperity and adverſity; the perpetual contradiction of each particular man's opinions and ſentiments; with many other topics of that kind. It is needleſs to inſiſt farther on this head. Theſe objections are but weak. For as, in common life, we reaſon every moment concerning fact and exiſtence, and cannot poſſibly ſubſiſt, without continually employing this ſpecies of argument, any popular objections, derived from thence, muſt be inſufficient to deſtroy that evidence. The great ſubverter of *Pyrrhoniſm* or the exceſſive principles of ſcepticiſm, is action, and employment, and the occupations of common life. Theſe principles may flouriſh and triumph in the ſchools; where it is, indeed, difficult, if not impoſſible, to refute them. But as ſoon as they leave the ſhade, and by the preſence of the real objects, which actuate our

† See NOTE [P].

our paſſions and ſentiments, are put in oppoſition to the more powerful principles of our nature, they vaniſh like ſmoke, and leave the moſt determined ſceptic in the ſame condition as other mortals.

' The ſceptic, therefore, had better keep within his proper ſphere, and diſplay thoſe *philoſophical* objections, which ariſe from more profound reſearches. Here he ſeems to have ample matter of triumph; while he juſtly inſiſts, that all our evidence for any matter of fact, which lies beyond the teſtimony of ſenſe or memory, is derived entirely from the relation of cauſe and effect; that we have no other idea of this relation than that of two objects, which have been frequently *conjoined* together; that we have no argument to convince us, that objects, which have, in our experience, been frequently conjoined, will likewiſe, in other inſtances, be conjoined in the ſame manner; and that nothing leads us to this inference but cuſtom or a certain inſtinct of our nature; which it is indeed difficult to reſiſt, but which, like other inſtincts, may be fallacious and deceitful. While the ſceptic inſiſts upon theſe topics, he ſhews his force, or rather, indeed, his own and our weakneſs; and ſeems, for the time at leaſt, to deſtroy all aſſurance and conviction. Theſe arguments might be diſplayed at greater length, if any durable good or benefit to ſociety could ever be expected to reſult from them.

For here is the chief and moſt confounding objection to *exceſſive* ſcepticiſm, that no durable good can ever reſult from it; while it remains in its full force and vigour. We need only aſk ſuch a ſceptic, *What his meaning is? And what he propoſes by all theſe curious reſearches?* He is immediately at a loſs, and knows not what to anſwer. A Copernican or Ptolemaic, who ſupports each his different ſyſtem of aſtronomy, may hope to produce a con-

a conviction, which will remain constant and durable, with his audience. A Stoic or Epicurean displays principles, which may not only be durable, but which have an effect on conduct and behaviour. But a Pyrrhonian cannot expect, that his philosophy will have any constant influence on the mind: Or if it had, that its influence would be beneficial to society. On the contrary, he must acknowledge, if he will acknowledge any thing, that all human life must perish, were his principles universally and steadily to prevail. All discourse, all action would immediately cease; and men remain in a total lethargy, till the necessities of nature, unsatisfied, put an end to their miserable existence. It is true; so fatal an event is very little to be dreaded. Nature is always too strong for principle. And though a Pyrrhonian may throw himself or others into a momentary amazement and confusion by his profound reasonings; the first and most trivial event in life will put to flight all his doubts and scruples; and leave him the same in every point of action and speculation, with the philosophers of every other sect, or with those who never concerned themselves in any philosophical researches. When he awakes from his dream, he will be the first to join in the laugh against himself, and to confess, that all his objections are mere amusement, and can have no other tendency than to show the whimsical condition of mankind, who must act and reason and believe; though they are not able, by their most diligent enquiry, to satisfy themselves concerning the foundation of these operations, or to remove the objections, which may be raised against them.

PART III.

There is, indeed, a more *mitigated* ſcepticiſm or *academical* philoſophy, which may be both durable and uſeful, and which may, in part, be the reſult of this Pyrrhoniſm, or *exceſſive* ſcepticiſm, when its undiſtinguiſhed doubts are, in ſome meaſure, corrected by common ſenſe and reflection. The greater part of mankind are naturally apt to be affirmative and dogmatical in their opinions; and while they ſee objects only on one ſide, and have no idea of any counterpoſing argument, they throw themſelves precipitately into the principles, to which they are inclined; nor have they indulgence for thoſe who entertain oppoſite ſentiments, To heſitate or balance perplexes their underſtanding, checks their paſſion, and ſuſpends their action. They are, therefore, impatient till they eſcape from a ſtate, which to them is ſo uneaſy; and they can never remove themſelves far enough from it, by the violence of their affirmations and obſtinacy of their belief. But could ſuch dogmatical reaſoners become ſenſible of the ſtrange infirmities of human underſtanding, even in its moſt perfect ſtate, and when moſt accurate and cautious in its determinations; ſuch a reflection would naturally inſpire them with more modeſty and reſerve, and diminiſh their fond opinion of themſelves, and their prejudice againſt antagoniſts. The illiterate may reflect on the diſpoſition of the learned, who, amidſt all the advantages of ſtudy and reflection, are commonly ſtill diffident in their determinations: And if any of the learned be inclined, from their natural temper, to haughtineſs and obſtinacy, a ſmall tincture of Pyrrhoniſm might abate their pride, by ſhewing them that the few advantages, which they may have attained over their fellows, are but inconſiderable,

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if compared with the universal perplexity and confusion, which is inherent in human nature. In general, there is a degree of doubt, and caution, and modesty, which, in all kinds of scrutiny and decision, ought for ever to accompany a just reasoner.

Another species of *mitigated* scepticism, which may be of advantage to mankind, and which may be the natural result of the Pyrrhonian doubts and scruples, is the limitation of our enquiries to such subjects as are best adapted to the narrow capacity of human understanding. The *imagination* of man is naturally sublime, delighted with whatever is remote and extraordinary, and running, without controul, into the most distant parts of space and time in order to avoid the objects, which custom has rendered too familiar to it. A correct *Judgment* observes a contrary method, and avoiding all distant and high enquiries, confines itself to common life, and to such subjects as fall under daily practice and experience; leaving the more sublime topics to the embellishment of poets and orators, or to the arts of priests and politicians. To bring us to so salutary a determination, nothing can be more serviceable, than to be once thoroughly convinced of the force of the Pyrrhonian doubt, and of the impossibility, that any thing, but the strong power of natural instinct, could free us from it. Those who have a propensity to philosophy, will still continue their researches; because they reflect, that besides the immediate pleasure, attending such an occupation, philosophical decisions are nothing but the reflections of common life, methodized and corrected. But they will never be tempted to go beyond common life, so long as they consider the imperfection of those faculties which they employ, their narrow reach, and their inaccurate operations. While we cannot give

give a ſatisfactory reaſon, why we believe, after a thouſand experiments, that a ſtone will fall, or fire burn; can we ever ſatisfy ourſelves concerning any determination, which we may form, with regard to the origin of worlds, and the ſituation of nature, from, and to eternity?

This narrow limitation, indeed, of our enquiries, is in every reſpect, ſo reaſonable, that it ſuffices to make the ſlighteſt examination into the natural powers of the human mind, and to compare them with their objects, in order to recommend it to us. We ſhall then find what are the proper ſubjects of ſcience and enquiry.

It ſeems to me, that the only objects of the abſtract ſciences or of demonſtration are quantity and number, and that all attempts to extend this more perfect ſpecies of knowledge beyond theſe bounds are mere ſophiſtry and illuſion. As the component parts of quantity and number are entirely ſimilar, their relations become intricate and involved; and nothing can be more curious, as well as uſeful, than to trace, by a variety of mediums, their equality or inequality, through their different appearances. But as all other ideas are clearly diſtinct and different from each other, we can never advance farther, by our utmoſt ſcrutiny, than to obſerve this diverſity, and by an obvious reflection, pronounce one thing not to be another. Or if there be any difficulty in theſe deciſions, it proceeds entirely from the undeterminate meaning of words, which is corrected by juſter definitions. That *the ſquare of the hypothenuſe is equal to the ſquares of the other two ſides*, cannot be known, let the terms be ever ſo exactly defined, without a train of reaſoning and enquiry. But to convince us of this propoſition, *that where there is no property, there can be no injuſtice*, it is only neceſſary to define the terms, and explain injuſtice to be a violation of property. This propoſition is, indeed, nothing but a more imperfect

fect definition. It is the same case with all those pretended syllogistical reasonings, which may be found in every other branch of learning, except the sciences of quantity and number; and these may safely, I think, be pronounced the only proper objects of knowledge and demonstration.

All other enquiries of men regard only matter of fact and existence; and these are evidently incapable of demonstration. Whatever *is* may *not be*. No negation of a fact can involve a contradiction. The non-existence of any being, without exception, is as clear and distinct an idea as its existence. The proposition, which affirms it not to be, however false, is no less conceivable and intelligible, than that which affirms it to be. The case is different with the sciences, properly so called. Every proposition, which is not true, is there confused and unintelligible. That the cube root of 64 is equal to the half of 10, is a false proposition, and can never be distinctly conceived. But that Cæsar, or the angel Gabriel, or any being never existed, may be a false proposition, but still is perfectly conceivable, and implies no contradiction.

The existence, therefore, of any being can only be proved by arguments from its effect; and these arguments are founded entirely on experience. If we reason *à priori*, any thing may appear able to produce any thing. The falling of a pebble may, for aught we know, extinguish the sun; or the wish of a man controul the planets in their orbits. It is only experience, which teaches us the nature and bounds of cause and effect, and enables us to infer the existence of one object from that of another*. Such is the foundation of moral reasoning, which forms the greater part of human knowledge, and is the source of all human action and behaviour.

Moral

* See NOTE [Q].

Moral reaſonings are either concerning particular or general facts. All deliberations in life regard the former; as alſo all diſquiſitions in hiſtory, chronology, geography, and aſtronomy. The ſciences, which treat of general facts, are politics, natural philoſophy, phyſic, chymiſtry, *&c.* where the qualities, cauſes and effects of a whole ſpecies of objects are enquired into.

Divinity or Theology, as it proves the exiſtence of a Deity, and the immortality of ſouls, is compoſed partly of reaſonings concerning particular, partly concerning general facts. It has a foundation in *reaſon*, ſo far as it is ſupported by experience. But its beſt and moſt ſolid foundation is *faith* and divine revelation.

Morals and criticiſm are not ſo properly objects of the underſtanding as of taſte and ſentiment. Beauty, whether moral or natural, is felt, more properly than perceived. Or if we reaſon concerning it, and endeavour to fix its ſtandard, we regard a new fact, to wit, the general taſte of mankind, or ſome ſuch fact, which may be the object of reaſoning and enquiry.

When we run over libraries, perſuaded of theſe principles, what havoc muſt we make? If we take in our hand any volume; of divinity or ſchool metaphyſics, for inſtance; let us aſk, *Does it contain any abſtract reaſoning concerning quantity or number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reaſoning concerning matter of fact and exiſtence?* No. Commit it then to the flames: For it can contain nothing but ſophiſtry and illuſion.

A DISSERTATION ON THE PASSIONS.

SECT. I.

1. SOME objects produce immediately an agreeable ſenſation, by the original ſtructure of our organs, and are thence denominated Good; as others, from their immediate diſagreeable ſenſation, acquire the appellation of Evil. Thus moderate warmth is agreeable and good; exceſſive heat painful and evil.

Some objects again, by being naturally conformable or contrary to paſſion, excite an agreeable or painful ſenſation; and are thence called *Good* or *Evil*. The puniſhment of an adverſary, by gratifying revenge, is good; the ſickneſs of a companion, by affecting friendſhip, is evil.

2. All good or evil, whence-ever it ariſes, produces various paſſions and affections, according to the light in which it is ſurveyed.

When good is certain or very probable, it produces Joy: When evil is in the ſame ſituation, there ariſes Grief or Sorrow.

When either good or evil is uncertain, it gives riſe to Fear or Hope, according to the degree of uncertainty on one ſide or the other.

Deſire ariſes from good conſidered ſimply; and Averſion, from evil. The Will exerts itſelf, when either the preſence of the good or abſence of the evil may be attained by any action of the mind or body.

3. None of theſe paſſions ſeem to contain any thing curious or remarkable, except *Hope* and *Fear*, which, being derived from the probability of any good or evil, are mixed paſſions, that merit our attention.

Probability ariſes from an oppoſition of contrary chances or cauſes, by which the mind is not allowed to fix on either ſide; but is inceſſantly toſſed from one to another, and is determined, one moment, to conſider an object as exiſtent, and another moment as the contrary. The imagination or underſtanding, call it which you pleaſe, fluctuates between the oppoſite views; and though perhaps it may be oftener turned to one ſide than the other, it is impoſſible for it, by reaſon of the oppoſition of cauſes or chances, to reſt on either. The *pro* and *con* of the queſtion alternately prevail; and the mind, ſurveying the objects in their oppoſite cauſes, finds ſuch a contrariety as deſtroys all certainty or eſtabliſhed opinion.

Suppoſe, then, that the object, concerning which we are doubtful, produces either deſire or averſion; it is evident, that, according as the mind turns itſelf to one ſide or the other, it muſt feel a momentary impreſſion of joy or ſorrow. An object, whoſe exiſtence we deſire, gives ſatisfaction, when we think of thoſe cauſes, which produce it; and for the ſame reaſon, excites grief or uneaſineſs from the oppoſite conſideration. So that, as the underſtanding, in probable queſtions,

is divided between the contrary points of view, the heart muſt in the ſame manner be divided between oppoſite emotions.

Now, if we conſider the human mind, we ſhall obſerve, that, with regard to the paſſions, it is not like a wind inſtrument of muſic, which, in running over all the notes, immediately loſes the ſound when the breath ceaſes; but rather reſembles a ſtring-inſtrument, where, after each ſtroke, the vibrations ſtill retain ſome ſound, which gradually and inſenſibly decays. The imagination is extremely quick and agile; but the paſſions, in compariſon, are ſlow and reſtive: For which reaſon, when any object is preſented, which affords a variety of views to the one and emotions to the other; though the fancy may change its views with great celerity; each ſtroke will not produce a clear and diſtinct note of paſſion, but the one paſſion will always be mixed and confounded with the other. According as the probability inclines to good or evil, the paſſion of grief or joy predominates in the compoſition; and theſe paſſions being intermingled by means of the contrary views of the imagination, produce by the union the paſſions of hope or fear.

4. As this theory ſeems to carry its own evidence along with it, we ſhall be more conciſe in our proofs.

The paſſions of fear and hope may ariſe, when the chances are equal on both ſides, and no ſuperiority can be diſcovered in one above the other. Nay, in this ſituation the paſſions are rather the ſtrongeſt, as the mind has then the leaſt foundation to reſt upon, and is toſt with the greateſt uncertainty. Throw in a ſuperior degree of probability to the ſide of grief, you immediately ſee that paſſion diffuſe itſelf over the compoſition, and tincture it into fear. Encreaſe the probability, and by that means the grief; the fear prevails ſtill more

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and more, 'till at laſt it runs inſenſibly, as the joy continually diminiſhes, into pure grief. After you have brought it to this ſituation, diminiſh the grief, by a contrary operation to that, which encreaſed it, to wit, by diminiſhing the probability on the melancholy ſide; and you will ſee the paſſion clear every moment, 'till it changes inſenſibly into hope; which again runs, by ſlow degrees, into joy, as you encreaſe that part of the compoſition, by the encreaſe of the probability. Are not theſe as plain proofs, that the paſſions of fear and hope are mixtures of grief and joy, as in optics it is a proof, that a coloured ray of the ſun, paſſing through a priſm, is a compoſition of two others, when, as you diminiſh or encreaſe the quantity of either, you find it prevail proportionably, more or leſs, in the compoſition?

5. Probability is of two kinds; either when the object is itſelf uncertain, and to be determined by chance; or when, though the object be already certain, yet it is uncertain to our judgment, which finds a number of proofs or preſumptions on each ſide of the queſtion. Both theſe kinds of probability cauſe fear and hope; which muſt proceed from that property, in which they agree; namely, the uncertainty and fluctuation which they beſtow on the paſſion, by that contrariety of views, which is common to both.

6. It is a probable good or evil, which commonly cauſes hope or fear; becauſe probability, producing an inconſtant and wavering ſurvey of an object, occaſions naturally a like mixture and uncertainty of paſſion. But we may obſerve, that, wherever, from other cauſes, this mixture can be produced, the paſſions of fear and hope will ariſe, even though there be no probability.

An evil, conceived as barely *poſſible*, ſometimes produces fear; eſpecially if the evil be very great. A man cannot think on exceſſive pain and

and torture without trembling, if he runs the leaſt riſque of ſuffering them. The ſmallneſs of the probability is compenſated by the greatneſs of the evil.

But even *impoſſible* evils cauſe fear; as when we tremble on the brink of a precipice, though we know ourſelves to be in perfect ſecurity, and have it in our choice, whether we will advance a ſtep farther. The immediate preſence of the evil influences the imagination and produces a ſpecies of belief; but being oppoſed by the reflection on our ſecurity, that belief is immediately retracted, and cauſes the ſame kind of paſſion, as when, from a contrariety of chances, contrary paſſions are produced.

Evils, which are *certain*, have ſometimes the ſame effect as the poſſible or impoſſible. A man, in a ſtrong priſon, without the leaſt means of eſcape, trembles at the thoughts of the rack, to which he is ſentenced. The evil is here fixed in itſelf; but the mind has not courage to fix upon it; and this fluctuation gives riſe to a paſſion of a ſimilar appearance with fear.

7. But it is not only where good or evil is uncertain as to its *exiſtence*, but alſo as to its *kind*, that fear or hope ariſes. If any one were told that one of his ſons is ſuddenly killed; the paſſion, occaſioned by this event, would not ſettle into grief, 'till he had got certain information which of his ſons he had loſt. Though each ſide of the queſtion produces here the ſame paſſion; that paſſion cannot ſettle, but receives from the imagination, which is unfixed, a tremulous unſteady motion, reſembling the mixture and contention of grief and joy.

8. Thus all kinds of uncertainty have a ſtrong connexion with fear, even though they do not cauſe any oppoſition of paſſions, by the oppoſite views which they preſent to us. Should I leave a friend

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in any malady, I ſhould feel more anxiety upon his account, than if he were preſent; though perhaps I am not only incapable of giving him aſſiſtance, but likewiſe of judging concerning the event of his ſickneſs. There are a thouſand little circumſtances of his ſituation and condition, which I deſire to know; and the knowledge of them would prevent that fluctuation and uncertainty, ſo nearly allied to fear. Horace has remarked this phænomenon.

Ut aſſidens implumibus pullus avis
Serpentûm allapſus timet,
Magis relictis; non, ut adſit, auxilî
Latura plus præſentibus.

A virgin on her bridal-night goes to bed full of fears and apprehenſions, though ſhe expects nothing but pleaſure. The confuſion of wiſhes and joys, the newneſs and greatneſs of the unknown event, ſo embarraſs the mind, that it knows not in what image or paſſion to fix itſelf.

9. Concerning the mixture of affections, we may remark, in general, that when contrary paſſions ariſe from objects nowiſe connected together, they take place alternately. Thus when a man is afflicted for the loſs of a law-ſuit, and joyful for the birth of a ſon, the mind, running from the agreeable to the calamitous object; with whatever celerity it may perform this motion, can ſcarcely temper the one affection with the other, and remain between them in a ſtate of indifference.

It more eaſily attains that calm ſituation, when the *ſame* event is of a mixed nature, and contains ſomething adverſe and ſomething proſperous in its different circumſtances. For in that caſe, both the paſſions, mingling with each other by means of the relation, often become mutually deſtructive, and leave the mind in perfect tranquillity.

But

But supppose, that the object is not a compound of good and evil, but is considered as probable or improbable in any degree; in that case, the contrary passions will both of them be present at once in the soul, and instead of balancing and tempering each other, will subsist together, and by their union produce a third impression or affection, such as hope or fear.

The influence of the relations of ideas (which we shall explain more fully afterwards) is plainly seen in this affair. In contrary passions, if the objects be *totally different*, the passions are like two opposite liquors in different bottles, which have no influence on each other. If the objects be intimately *connected*, the passions are like an *alcali* and an *acid*, which, being mingled, destroy each other. If the relation be more imperfect, and consist in the *contradictory* views of the *same* object, the passions are like oil and vinegar, which, however mingled, never perfectly unite and incorporate.

The effect of a mixture of passions, when one of them is predominant, and swallows up the other, shall be explained afterwards.

SECT. II.

1. Besides those passions above-mentioned, which arise from a direct pursuit of good and aversion to evil, there are others which are of a more complicated nature, and imply more than one view or consideration. Thus *Pride* is a certain satisfaction in ourselves, on account of some accomplishment or possession, which we enjoy! *Humility*, on the other hand, is a dissatisfaction with ourselves, on account of some defect or infirmity.

Love or *Friendship* is a complacency in another, on account of his accomplishments or services: *Hatred*, the contrary.

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2. In these two sets of passion, there is an obvious distinction to be made between the *object* of the passion and its *cause*. The object of pride and humility is self: The cause of the passion is some excellence in the former case; some fault, in the latter. The object of love and hatred is some other person: The causes, in like manner, are either excellencies or faults.

With regard to all these passions, the causes are what excite the emotion; the object is what the mind directs its view to when the emotion is excited. Our merit, for instance, raises pride; and it is essential to pride to turn our view on ourselves with complacency and satisfaction.

Now, as the causes of these passions are very numerous and various, though their object be uniform and simple; it may be a subject of curiosity to consider, what that circumstance is, in which all these various causes agree; or in other words, what is the real efficient cause of the passion. We shall begin with pride and humility.

3. In order to explain the causes of these passions, we must reflect on certain principles, which, though they have a mighty influence on every operation, both of the understanding and passions, are not commonly much insisted on by philosophers. The first of these is the *association* of ideas, or that principle, by which we make an easy transition from one idea to another. However uncertain and changeable our thoughts may be, they are not entirely without rule and method in their changes. They usually pass with regularity, from one object, to what resembles it, is contiguous to it, or produced by it *. When one idea is present to the imagination, any other, united by these relations, naturally follows it, and enters

* See Enquiry concerning Human Understanding, Sect. III.

enters with more facility, by means of that introduction.

The *second* property, which I shall observe in the human mind, is a like association of impressions or emotions. All *resembling* impressions are connected together; and no sooner one arises, than the rest naturally follow. Grief and disappointment give rise to anger, anger to envy, envy to malice, and malice to grief again. In like manner, our temper, when elevated with joy, naturally throws itself into love, generosity, courage, pride, and other resembling affections.

In the *third* place, it is observable of these two kinds of association, that they very much assist and forward each other, and that the transition is more easily made, where they both concur in the same object. Thus, a man, who, by an injury received from another, is very much discomposed and ruffled in his temper, is apt to find a hundred subjects of hatred, discontent, impatience, fear, and other uneasy passions; especially, if he can discover these subjects in or near the person, who was the object of his first emotion. Those principles, which forward the transition of ideas, here concur with those which operate on the passions; and both, uniting in one action, bestow on the mind a double impulse.

Upon this occasion I may cite a passage from an elegant writer, who expresses himself in the following manner *: " As the fancy delights in " every thing, that is great, strange, or beautiful, " and is still the more pleased the more it finds " of these perfections in the *same* object, so it is " capable of receiving new satisfaction by the as- " sistance of another sense. Thus, any continual " sound, as the music of birds, or a fall of waters, " awakens every moment the mind of the be- " holder,

* Addison, Spectator, No. 412.

" holder, and makes him more attentive to the
" ſeveral beauties of the place, that lie before
" him. Thus, if there ariſes a fragrancy of ſmells
" or perfumes, they heighten the pleaſure of the
" imagination, and make even the colours and
" verdure of the landſcape appear more agreeable°;
" for the ideas of both ſenſes recommend each
" other, and are pleaſanter together than where
" they enter the mind ſeparately: As the differ-
" ent colours of a picture, when they are well diſ-
" poſed, ſet off one another, and receive an additi-
" beauty from the advantage of the ſituation."
In theſe phænomena, we may remark the aſſociation both of impreſſions and ideas; as well as the mutual aſſiſtance theſe aſſociations lend to each other.

4. It ſeems to me, that both theſe ſpecies of relation have place in producing *Pride* or *Humility*, and are the real, efficient cauſes of the paſſion.

With regard to the firſt relation, that of ideas, there can be no queſtion. Whatever we are proud of muſt, in ſome manner, belong to us. It is always *our* knowledge, *our* ſenſe, beauty, poſſeſſions, family, on which we value ourſelves. Self, which is the *object* of the paſſion, muſt ſtill be related to that quality or circumſtance, which *cauſes* the paſſion. There muſt be a connexion between them; an eaſy tranſition of the imagination; or a facility of the conception in paſſing from one to the other. Where this connexion is wanting, no object can either excite pride or humility; and the more you weaken the connexion, the more you weaken the paſſion.

5. The only ſubject of enquiry is, whether there be a like relation of impreſſions or ſentiments, wherever pride or humility is felt; whether the circumſtance, which cauſes the paſſion, previouſly excites a ſentiment ſimilar to the paſ-

ſion;

ſion; and whether there be any transfuſion of the one into the other.

The feeling or ſentiment of pride is agreeable; of humility, painful. An agreeable ſenſation is, therefore, related to the former; a painful, to the latter. And if we find, after examination, that every object, which produces pride, produces alſo a ſeparate pleaſure; and every object, which cauſes humility, excites in like manner a ſeparate uneaſineſs; we muſt allow, in that caſe, that the preſent theory is fully proved and aſcertained. The double relation of ideas and ſentiments will be acknowledged inconteſtable.

6. To begin with perſonal merit and demerit, the moſt obvious cauſes of theſe paſſions; it would be entirely foreign to our preſent purpoſe to examine the foundation of moral diſtinctions. It is ſufficient to obſerve, that the foregoing theory concerning the origin of the paſſions may be defended on any hypotheſis. The moſt probable ſyſtem, which has been advanced to explain the difference between vice and virtue, is, that either from a primary conſtitution of nature, or from a ſenſe of public or private intereſt, certain characters, upon the very view and contemplation, produce uneaſineſs; and others, in like manner, excite pleaſure. The uneaſineſs and ſatisfaction, produced in the ſpectator, are eſſential to vice and virtue. To approve of a character, is to feel a delight upon its appearance. To diſapprove of it, is to be ſenſible of an uneaſineſs. The pain and pleaſure, therefore, being, in a manner, the primary ſource of blame or praiſe, muſt alſo be the cauſes of all their effects; and conſequently, the cauſes of pride and humility, which are the unavoidable attendants of that diſtinction.

But ſuppoſing this theory of morals ſhould not be received; it is ſtill evident that pain and pleaſure,

ſure, if not the ſources of moral diſtinctions, are at leaſt inſeparable from them. A generous and noble character affords a ſatisfaction even in the ſurvey; and when preſented to us, though only in a poem or fable, never fails to charm and delight us. On the other hand, cruelty and treachery diſpleaſe from their very nature; nor is it poſſible ever to reconcile us to theſe qualities, either in ourſelves or others. Virtue, therefore, produces always a pleaſure diſtinct from the pride or ſelf-ſatisfaction which attends it: Vice, an uneaſineſs ſeparate from the humility or remorſe.

But a high or low conceit of ourſelves ariſes not from thoſe qualities alone of the mind, which, according to common ſyſtems of ethics, have been defined parts of moral duty; but from any other, which have a connexion with pleaſure or uneaſineſs. Nothing flatters our vanity more than the talent of pleaſing by our wit, good-humour, or any other accompliſhment; and nothing gives us a more ſenſible mortification, than a diſappointment in any attempt of that kind. No one has ever been able to tell preciſely, what *wit* is, and to ſhew why ſuch a ſyſtem of thought muſt be received under that denomination, and ſuch another rejected. It is by taſte alone we can decide concerning it; nor are we poſſeſſed of any other ſtandard, by which we can form a judgment of this nature. Now what is this *taſte*, from which true and falſe wit in a manner receive their being, and without which no thought can have a title to either of theſe denominations? It is plainly nothing but a ſenſation of pleaſure from true wit, and of diſguſt from falſe, without our being able to tell the reaſons of that ſatisfaction or uneaſineſs. The power of exciting theſe oppoſite ſenſations is, therefore, the very eſſence of true or falſe wit; and conſequently, the cauſe of that vanity or mortification, which ariſes from one or the other.

7. Beauty

7. Beauty of all kinds gives us a peculiar delight and ſatisfaction; as deformity produces pain, upon whatever ſubject it may be placed, and whether ſurveyed in an animate or inanimate object. If the beauty or deformity belong to our own face, ſhape, or perſon, this pleaſure or uneaſineſs is converted into pride or humility; as having in this caſe all the circumſtances requiſite to produce a perfect tranſition, according to the preſent theory.

It would ſeem, that the very eſſence of beauty conſiſts in its power of producing pleaſure. All its effects, therefore, muſt proceed from this circumſtance: And if beauty is ſo univerſally the ſubject of vanity, it is only from its being the cauſe of pleaſure.

Concerning all other bodily accompliſhments, we may obſerve in general, that whatever in ourſelves is either uſeful, beautiful, or ſurprizing, is an object of pride; and the contrary of humility. Theſe qualities agree in producing a ſeparate pleaſure; and agree in nothing elſe.

We are vain of the ſurprizing adventures which we have met with, the eſcapes which we have made, the dangers to which we have been expoſed: as well as of our ſurpriſing feats of vigour and activity. Hence the origin of vulgar lying; where men, without any intereſt, and merely out of vanity, heap up a number of extraordinary events, which are either the fictions of their brain; or, if true, have no connexion with themſelves. Their fruitful invention ſupplies them with a variety of adventures; and where that talent is wanting, they appropriate ſuch as belong to others, in order to gratify their vanity: For between that paſſion, and the ſentiment of pleaſure, there is always a cloſe connexion.

8. But though pride and humility have the qualities of our mind and body, that is, of ſelf, for their natural and more immediate cauſes; we find by

by experience, that many other objects produce these affections. We found vanity upon houses, gardens, equipage, and other external objects; as well as upon personal merit and accomplishments. This happens when external objects acquire any particular relation to ourselves, and are associated or connected with us. A beautiful fish in the ocean, a well-proportioned animal in a forest, and indeed, any thing, which neither belongs nor is related to us, has no manner of influence on our vanity; whatever extraordinary qualities it may be endowed with, and whatever degree of surprize and admiration it may naturally occasion. It must be someway associated with us, in order to touch our pride. Its idea must hang, in a manner, upon that of ourselves; and the transition from one to the other must be easy and natural.

Men are vain of the beauty either of *their* country, or even of *their* parish. Here the idea of beauty plainly produces a pleasure. This pleasure is related to pride. The object or cause of this pleasure is, by the supposition, related to self, the object of pride. By this double relation of sentiments and ideas, a transition is made from one to the other.

Men are also vain of the happy temperature of the climate, in which they are born; of the fertility of their native soil; of the goodness of the wines, fruits, or victuals, produced by it; of the softness or force of their language, with other particulars of that kind. These objects have plainly a reference to the pleasures of sense, and are originally considered as agreeable to the feeling, taste or hearing. How could they become causes of pride, except by means of that transition above explained?

There are some, who discover a vanity of an opposite kind, and affect to depreciate their own country, in comparison of those, to which they

have

have travelled. These persons find, when they are at home, and surrounded with their countrymen, that the strong relation between them and their own nation is shared with so many, that it is in a manner lost to them; whereas, that distant relation to a foreign country, which is formed by their having seen it, and lived in it, is augmented by their considering how few have done the same. For this reason, they always admire the beauty, utility, and rarity of what they met with abroad, above what they find at home.

Since we can be vain of a country, climate or any inanimate object, which bears a relation to us; it is no wonder we should be vain of the qualities of those, who are connected with us by blood or friendship. Accordingly we find, that any qualities which, when belonging to ourselves, produce pride, produce also, in a less degree, the same affection, when discovered in persons, related to us. The beauty, address, merit, credit, and honours of their kindred are carefully displayed by the proud, and are considerable sources of their vanity.

As we are proud of riches of ourselves, we desire, in order to gratify our vanity, that every one who has any connexion with us, should likewise be possessed of them, and are ashamed of such as are mean or poor among our friends and relations. Our forefathers being regarded as our nearest relations; every one naturally affects to be of a good family, and to be descended from a long succession of rich and honourable ancestors.

Those, who boast of the antiquity of their families, are glad when they can join this circumstance, that their ancestors, for many generations, have been uninterrupted proprietors of the *same* portion of land, and that their family has never changed its possessions, or been transplanted into

any other country or province. It is an additional subject of vanity, when they can boaſt, that theſe poſſeſſions have been tranſmitted through a deſcent, compoſed entirely of males, and that the honours and fortune have never paſſed through any female. Let us endeavour to explain theſe phænomena from the foregoing theory.

When any one values himſelf on the antiquity of his family, the ſubjects of his vanity are not merely the extent of time and number of anceſtors (for in that reſpect all mankind are alike), but theſe circumſtances, joined to the riches and credit of his anceſtors, which are ſuppoſed to reflect a luſtre on himſelf, upon account of his connexion with them. Since therefore the paſſion depends on the connexion, whatever ſtrengthens the connexion muſt alſo encreaſe the paſſion, and whatever weakens the connexion muſt diminiſh the paſſion. But it is evident, that the ſameneſs of the poſſeſſions muſt ſtrengthen the relation of ideas, ariſing from blood and kindred, and convey the fancy with greater facility from one generation to another; from the remoteſt anceſtors to their poſterity, who are both their heirs and their deſcendants. By this facility, the ſentiment is tranſmitted more entire, and excites a greater degree of pride and vanity.

The caſe is the ſame with the tranſmiſſion of the honours and fortune, through a ſucceſſion of males, without their paſſing through any female. It is an obvious quality of human nature, that the imagination naturally turns to whatever is important and conſiderable; and where two objects are preſented, a ſmall and a great, it uſually leaves the former, and dwells entirely on the latter. This is the reaſon, why children commonly bear their father's name, and are eſteemed to be of a nobler or meaner birth, according to *his* family. And though the mother ſhould be poſſeſſed

ſed of ſuperior qualities to the father, as often happens, the *general rule* prevails, notwithſtanding the exception, according to the doctrine, which ſhall be explained afterwards. Nay, even when a ſuperiority of any kind is ſo great, or when any other reaſons have ſuch an effect, as to make the children rather repreſent the mother's family than the father's, the general rule ſtill retains an efficacy, ſufficient to weaken the relation, and make a kind of breach in the line of anceſtors. The imagination runs not along them with the ſame facility, nor is able to transfer the honour and credit of the anceſtors to their poſterity of the ſame name and family ſo readily, as when the tranſition is conformable to the general rule, and paſſes through the male line, from father to ſon, or from brother to brother.

9. But *property*, as it gives us the fulleſt power and authority over any object, is the relation, which has the greateſt influence on theſe paſſions *.

Every thing, belonging to a vain man, is the beſt that is any where to be found. His houſes, equipage, furniture, cloaths, horſes, hounds, excel all others in his conceit; and it is eaſy to obſerve, that, from the leaſt advantage in any of theſe he draws a new ſubject of pride and vanity. His wine, if you will believe him, has a finer flavour than any other; his cookery is more exquiſite; his table more orderly; his ſervants more expert; the air, in which he lives, more healthful; the ſoil, which he cultivates, more fertile; his fruits ripen earlier, and to greater perfection: Such a thing is remarkable for its novelty; ſuch another for its antiquity: This is the workmanſhip of a famous artiſt; that belonged once to ſuch a prince or great man. All objects, in a word, which are uſeful, beautiful, or ſurprizing, or are related to

 ſuch,

* See NOTE [R].

ſuch, may, by means of property, give riſe to this paſſion. Theſe all agree in giving pleaſure. This alone is common to them; and therefore muſt be the quality, that produces the paſſion, which is their common effect. As every new inſtance is a new argument, and as the inſtances are here without number; it would ſeem, that this theory is ſufficiently confirmed by experience.

Riches imply the power of acquiring whatever is agreeable; and as they comprehend many particular objects of vanity, neceſſarily become one of the chief cauſes of that paſſion.

10. Our opinions of all kinds are ſtrongly affected by ſociety and ſympathy, and it is almoſt impoſſible for us to ſupport any principle or ſentiment, againſt the univerſal conſent of every one, with whom we have any friendſhip or correſpondence. But of all our opinions, thoſe, which we form in our own favour, however lofty or preſuming; are, at bottom, the frailеſt, and the moſt eaſily ſhaken by the contradiction and oppoſition of others. Our great concern, in this caſe, makes us ſoon alarmed, and keeps our paſſions upon the watch: Our conſciouſneſs of partiality ſtill makes us dread a miſtake: And the very difficulty of judging concerning an object, which is never ſet at a due diſtance from us, nor is ſeen in a proper point of view, makes us hearken anxiouſly to the opinions of others, who are better qualified to form juſt opinions concerning us. Hence that ſtrong love of fame, with which all mankind are poſſeſſed. It is in order to fix and confirm their favourable opinion of themſelves, not from any original paſſion, that they ſeek the applauſes of others. And when a man deſires to be praiſed, it is for the ſame reaſon, that a beauty is pleaſed with ſurveying herſelf in a favourable looking-glaſs, and ſeeing the reflection of her own charms.

Though

Though it be difficult, in all points of ſpeculation, to diſtinguiſh a cauſe, which encreaſes an effect, from one, which ſolely produces it; yet in the preſent caſe the phænomena ſeem pretty ſtrong and ſatisfactory in confirmation of the foregoing principle.

We receive a much greater ſatisfaction from the approbation of thoſe whom we ourſelves eſteem and approve of, than of thoſe whom we contemn and deſpiſe.

When eſteem is obtained after a long and intimate acquaintance, it gratifies our vanity in a peculiar manner.

The ſuffrage of thoſe, who are ſhy and backward in giving praiſe, is attended with an additional reliſh and enjoyment, if we can obtain it in our favour.

Where a great man is delicate in his choice of favourites, every one courts with greater earneſtneſs his countenance and protection.

Praiſe never gives us much pleaſure, unleſs it concur with our own opinion, and extol us for thoſe qualities, in which we chiefly excel.

Theſe phænomena ſeem to prove, that the favourable ſuffrages of the world are regarded only as authorities, or confirmations of our own opinion. And if the opinions of others have more influence in this ſubject than in any other, it is eaſily accounted for from the nature of the ſubject.

11. Thus few objects, however related to us, and whatever pleaſure they produce, are able to excite a great degree of pride or ſelf-ſatisfaction; unleſs they be alſo obvious to others, and engage the approbation of the ſpectators. What diſpoſition of mind ſo deſirable as the peaceful, reſigned, contented; which readily ſubmits to all the diſpenſations of providence, and preſerves a conſtant ſerenity amidſt the greateſt misfortunes and diſappointments? Yet this diſpoſition, though acknowledged to be a virtue or excellence, is ſeldom the

foundation of great vanity or ſelf-applauſe; having no brilliancy or exterior luſtre, and rather cheering the heart, than animating the behaviour and converſation. The caſe is the ſame with many other qualities of the mind, body, or fortune; and this circumſtance, as well as the double relations above mentioned, muſt be admitted to be of conſequence in the production of theſe paſſions.

A ſecond circumſtance, which is of conſequence in this affair, is the conſtancy and durableneſs of the object. What is very caſual and inconſtant, beyond the common courſe of human affairs, gives little joy, and leſs pride. We are not much ſatisfied with the thing itſelf; and are ſtill leſs apt to feel any new degree of ſelf-ſatisfaction upon its account. We foreſee and anticipate its change; which makes us little ſatisfied with the thing itſelf: We compare it to ourſelves, whoſe exiſtence is more durable; by which means its inconſtancy appears ſtill greater. It ſeems ridiculous to make ourſelves the object of a paſſion, on account of a quality or poſſeſſion, which is of ſo much ſhorter duration, and attends us during ſo ſmall a part of our exiſtence.

A third circumſtance, not to be neglected, is that the objects, in order to produce pride or ſelf-value, muſt be peculiar to us, or at leaſt common to us with a few others. The advantages of ſun-ſhine, good weather, a happy climate, &c. diſtinguiſh us not from any of our companions, and give us no preference or ſuperiority. The compariſon, which we are every moment apt to make, preſents no inference to our advantage; and we ſtill remain, notwithſtanding theſe enjoyments, on a level with all our friends and acquaintance.

As health and ſickneſs vary inceſſantly to all men, and there is no one, who is ſolely or certainly fixed in either; theſe accidental bleſſings and calamities are in a manner ſeparated from us, and are not

not conſidered as a foundation for vanity or humiliation. But wherever a malady of any kind is ſo rooted in our conſtitution, that we no longer entertain any hope of recovery, from that moment it damps our ſelf-conceit, as is evident in old men, whom nothing mortifies more than the conſideration of their age and infirmities. They endeavour, as long as poſſible, to conceal their blindneſs and deafneſs, their rheums and gouts; nor do they ever avow them without reluctance and uneaſineſs. And though young men are not aſhamed of every head-ach or cold which they fall into; yet no topic is more proper to mortify human pride, and make us entertain a mean opinion of our nature, than this, that we are every moment of our lives ſubject to ſuch infirmities. This proves, that bodily pain and ſickneſs are in themſelves proper cauſes of humility; though the cuſtom of eſtimating every thing, by compariſon, more than by its intrinſic worth and value, makes us overlook thoſe calamities, which we find incident to every one, and cauſes us to form an idea of our merit and character, independent of them.

We are aſhamed of ſuch maladies as affect others, and are either dangerous or diſagreeable to them. Of the epilepſy; becauſe it gives a horror to every one preſent: Of the itch; becauſe it is infectious: Of the king's evil; becauſe it often goes to poſterity. Men always conſider the ſentiments of others in their judgment of themſelves.

A fourth circumſtance, which has an influence on theſe paſſions, is *general rules*; by which we form a notion of different ranks of men, ſuitably to the power or riches of which they are poſſeſſed; and this notion is not changed by any peculiarities of the health or temper of the perſons, which may deprive them of all enjoyment in their poſſeſſions. Cuſtom readily carries us beyond the juſt bounds in our paſſions, as well as in our reaſonings It

It may not be amiſs to obſerve on this occaſion, that the influence of general rules and maxims on the paſſions very much contributes to facilitate the effects of all the principles or internal mechaniſm, which we here explain. For it ſeems evident, that, if a perſon full grown, and of the ſame nature with ourſelves, were on a ſudden tranſported into our world, he would be much embarraſſed with every object, and would not readily determine what degree of love or hatred, of pride or humility, or of any other paſſion ſhould be excited by it. The paſſions are often varied by very inconſiderable principles; and theſe do not always play with perfect regularity, eſpecially on the firſt trial. But as cuſtom or practice has brought to light all theſe principles, and has ſettled the juſt value of every thing; this muſt certainly contribute to the eaſy production of the paſſions, and guide us, by means of general eſtabliſhed rules, in the proportions, which we ought to obſerve in preferring one object to another. This remark may, perhaps, ſerve to obviate difficulties, that may ariſe concerning ſome cauſes, which we here aſcribe to particular paſſions, and which may be eſteemed too refined to operate ſo univerſally and certainly, as they are found to do.

PART III.

1. In running over all the cauſes, which produce the paſſion of pride or that of humility; it would readily occur, that the ſame circumſtance, if transferred from ourſelves to another perſon, would render him the object of love or hatred, eſteem or contempt. The virtue, genius, beauty, family, riches, and authority of others beget favourable ſentiments in their behalf; and their vice, folly, deformity, poverty, and meanneſs excite the contrary ſentiments. The double relation

tion of impreſſions and ideas ſtill operates on theſe paſſions of love and hatred; as on the former of pride and humility. Whatever gives a ſeparate pleaſure or pain, and is related to another perſon or connected with him, makes him the object of our affection or diſguſt.

Hence too injury or contempt towards us is one of the greateſt ſources of our hatred; ſervices or eſteem, of our friendſhip.

2. Sometimes a relation to ourſelves excites affection towards any perſon. But there is always here implied a relation of ſentiments, without which the other relation would have no influence*,

A perſon, who is related to us, or connected with us, by blood, by ſimilitude of fortune, of adventures, profeſſion, or country, ſoon becomes an agreeable companion to us; becauſe we enter eaſily and familiarly into his ſentiments and conceptions: Nothing is ſtrange or new to us: Our imagination, paſſing from ſelf, which is ever intimately preſent to us, runs ſmoothly along the relation or connexion, and conceives with a full ſympathy the perſon, who is nearly related to ſelf. He renders himſelf immediately acceptable, and is at once on an eaſy footing with us: No diſtance, no reſerve has place, where the perſon introduced is ſuppoſed ſo cloſely connected with us.

Relation has here the ſame influence as cuſtom or acquaintance, in exciting affection; and from like cauſes. The eaſe and ſatisfaction, which, in both caſes, attend our intercourſe or commerce, is the ſource of the friendſhip.

3. The paſſions of love and hatred are always followed by, or rather conjoined with, benevolence

* The affection of parents to children ſeems founded on an original inſtinct. The affection towards other relations depends on the principles here explained.

lence and anger. It is this conjunction, which chiefly diftinguifhes thefe affections from pride and humility. For pride and humility are pure emotions in the foul, unattended with any defire, and not immediately exciting us to action. But love and hatred are not compleat within themfelves, nor reft in that emotion, which they produce; but carry the mind to fomething farther. Love is always followed by a defire of happinefs to the perfon beloved, and an averfion to his mifery: As hatred produces a defire of the mifery, and an averfion to the happinefs of the perfon hated. Thefe oppofite defires feem to be originally and primarily conjoined with the paffions of love and hatred. It is a conftitution of nature, of which we can give no farther explication.

4. Compaffion frequently arifes, where there is no preceding efteem or friendfhip; and compaffion is an uneafinefs in the fufferings of another. It feems to fpring from the intimate and ftrong conception of his fufferings; and our imagination proceeds by degrees, from the lively idea to the real feeling of another's mifery.

Malice and envy alfo arife in the mind without any preceding hatred or injury; though their tendency is exactly the fame with that of anger and ill-will. The comparifon of ourfelves with others feems to be the fource of envy and malice. The more unhappy another is, the more happy do we ourfelves appear in our own conception.

5. The fimilar tendency of compaffion to that of benevolence, and of envy to anger, forms a very clofe relation between thefe two fets of paffions; though of a different kind from that which was infifted on above. It is not a refemblance of feeling or fentiment, but a refemblance of tendency or direction. Its effect, however, is the

fame,

fame, in producing an aſſociation of paſſions. Compaſſion is ſeldom or never felt without ſome mixture of tenderneſs or friendſhip: and envy is naturally accompanied with anger or ill-will. To deſire the happineſs of another, from whatever motive, is a good preparative to affection; and to delight in another's miſery almoſt unavoidably begets averſion towards him.

Even where intereſt is the ſource of our concern, it is commonly attended with the ſame conſequences. A partner is a natural object of friendſhip; a rival of enmity.

6. Poverty, meanneſs, diſappointment, produce contempt and diſlike: But when theſe misfortunes are very great, or are repreſented to us in very ſtrong colours, they excite compaſſion, and tenderneſs, and friendſhip. How is this contradiction to be accounted for? The poverty and meanneſs of another, in their common appearance, gives us uneaſineſs, by a ſpecies of imperfect ſympathy; and this uneaſineſs produces averſion or diſlike, from the reſemblance of ſentiment. But when we enter more intimately into another's concerns, and wiſh for his happineſs, as well as feel his miſery, friendſhip or good-will ariſes, from the ſimilar tendency of the inclinations.

A bankrupt, at firſt, while the idea of his miſfortunes is freſh and recent, and while the compariſon of his preſent unhappy ſituation with his former proſperity operates ſtrongly upon us, meets with compaſſion and friendſhip. After theſe ideas are weakened or obliterated by time, he is in danger of compaſſion and contempt.

7. In reſpect, there is a mixture of humility, with the eſteem or affection: In contempt, a mixture of pride.

The amorous paſſion is uſually compounded of complacency in beauty, a bodily appetite, and friendſhip

friendſhip or affection. The cloſe relation of theſe ſentiments is very obvious, as well as their origin from each other, by means of that relation. Were there no other phænomena to reconcile us to the preſent theory, this alone, methinks, were ſufficient.

SECT. IV.

1. The preſent theory of paſſions depends entirely on the double relation of ſentiments and ideas, and the mutual aſſiſtance, which theſe relations lend to each other. It may not, therefore, be improper to illuſtrate theſe principles by ſome farther inſtances.

2. The virtues, talents, accompliſhments, and poſſeſſions of others, make us love and eſteem them: Becauſe theſe objects excite a pleaſing ſenſation, which is related to love; and as they have alſo a relation or connexion with the perſon, this union of ideas forwards the union of ſentiment, according to the foregoing reaſoning.

But ſuppoſe, that the perſon, whom we love, is alſo related to us, by blood, country, or friendſhip; it is evident, that a ſpecies of pride muſt alſo be excited by his accompliſhments and poſſeſſions; there being the ſame double relation, which we have all along inſiſted on. The perſon is related to us, or there is an eaſy tranſition of thought from him to us; and the ſentiments, excited by his advantages and virtues, are agreeable, and conſequently related to pride. Accordingly we find, that people are naturally vain of the good qualities or high fortune of their friends and countrymen.

3. But it is obſervable, that, if we reverſe the order of the paſſions, the ſame effect does not follow. We paſs eaſily from love and affection to pride and vanity; but not from the latter paſ-

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ſions to the former, though all the relations be the ſame. We love not thoſe who are related to us, on account of our own merit; though they are naturally vain on account of our merit. What is the reaſon of this difference? The tranſition of the imagination to ourſelves, from objects related to us, is always eaſy; both on account of the relation, which facilitates the tranſition, and becauſe we there paſs from remoter objects, to thoſe which are contiguous. But in paſſing from ourſelves to objects, related to us; though the former principle forwards the tranſition of thought, yet the latter oppoſes it; and conſequently there is not the ſame eaſy tranſfuſion of paſſions from pride to love as from love to pride.

4. The virtues, ſervices, and fortune of one man inſpire us readily with eſteem and affection for another related to him. The ſon of our friend is naturally entitled to our friendſhip: The kindred of a very great man value themſelves, and are valued by others, on account of that relation. The force of the double relation is here fully diſplayed.

5. The following are inſtances of another kind, where the operation of theſe principles may ſtill be diſcovered. Envy ariſes from a ſuperiority in others; but it is obſervable, that it is not the great diſproportion between us, which excites that paſſion, but on the contrary, our proximity. A great diſproportion cuts off the relation of the ideas, and either keeps us from comparing ourſelves with what is remote from us, or diminiſhes the effects of the compariſon.

A poet is not apt to envy a philoſopher, or a poet of a different kind, of a different nation, or of a different age. All theſe differences, if they do not prevent, at leaſt weaken the compariſon and conſequently the paſſion.

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This too is the reaſon, why all objects appear great or little, merely by a compariſon with thoſe of the ſame ſpecies. A mountain neither magnifies nor diminiſhes a horſe in our eyes: But when a Flemiſh and a Welſh horſe are ſeen together, the one appears greater and the other leſs, than when viewed apart.

From the ſame principle we may account for that remark of hiſtorians, that any party, in a civil war, or even factions diviſion, always chooſe to call in a foreign enemy at any hazard, rather than ſubmit to their fellow-citizens. Guicciardin applies this remark to the wars in Italy; where the relations between the different ſtates are, properly ſpeaking, nothing but of name, language, and contiguity. Yet even theſe relations, when joined with ſuperiority, by making the compariſon more natural, make it likewiſe more grievous, and cauſe men to ſearch for ſome other ſuperiority, which may be attended with no relation, and by that means, may have a leſs ſenſible influence on the imagination. When we cannot break the aſſociation, we feel a ſtronger deſire to remove the ſuperiority. This ſeems to be the reaſon, why travellers, though commonly laviſh of their praiſe to the Chineſe and Perſians, take care to depreciate thoſe neighbouring nations, which may ſtand upon a footing of rivalſhip with their native country.

6. The fine arts afford us parallel inſtances. Should an author compoſe a treatiſe, of which one part was ſerious and profound, another light and humorous; every one would condemn ſo ſtrange a mixture, and would blame him for the neglect of all rules of art and criticiſm. Yet we accuſe not Prior for joining his *Alma* and *Solomon* in the ſame volume; though that amiable poet has perfectly ſucceeded in the gaiety of the one, as well as in the melancholy of the other.

other. Even ſuppoſe the reader ſhould peruſe theſe two compoſitions without any interval, he would feel little or no difficulty in the change of the paſſions. Why? but becauſe he conſiders theſe performances as entirely different; and by that break in the ideas, breaks the progreſs of the affections, and hinders the one from influencing or contradicting the other.

An heroic and burleſque deſign, united in one picture, would be monſtrous; though we place two pictures of ſo oppoſite a character in the ſame chamber, and even cloſe together, without any ſcruple.

7. It needs be no matter of wonder, that the eaſy tranſition of the imagination ſhould have ſuch an influence on all the paſſions. It is this very circumſtance, which forms all the relations and connexions amongſt objects. We know no real connexion between one thing and another. We only know, that the idea of one thing is aſſociated with that of another, and that the imagination makes an eaſy tranſition between them. And as the eaſy tranſition of ideas, and that of ſentiments mutually aſſiſt each other; we might before-hand expect, that this principle muſt have a mighty influence on all our internal movements and affections. And experience ſufficiently confirms the theory.

For, not to repeat all the foregoing inſtances: Suppoſe, that I were travelling with a companion through a country, to which we are both utter ſtrangers; it is evident, that, if the proſpects be beautiful, the roads agreable, and the fields finely cultivated; this may ſerve to put me in good-humour, both with myſelf and fellow-traveller. But as the country has no connexion with myſelf or friend, it can never be the immediate cauſe either of ſelf-value or of regard to him: And therefore, if I found not the paſſion

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on ſome other object, which bears to one of us a cloſer relation, my emotions are rather to be conſidered as the overflowings of an elevated or humane diſpoſition, than as an eſtabliſhed paſſion. But ſuppoſing the agreeable proſpect before us to be ſurveyed either from his country-ſeat or from mine; this new connexion of ideas gives a new direction to the ſentiment of pleaſure, derived from the proſpect, and raiſes the emotion of regard or vanity, according to the nature of the connexion. There is not here, methinks, much room for doubt or difficulty.

SECT. V.

1. It ſeems evident, that reaſon, in a ſtrict ſenſe, as meaning the judgment of truth and falſehood, can never, of itſelf, be any motive to the will, and can have no influence but ſo far as it touches ſome paſſion or affection. *Abſtract relations* of ideas are the object of curioſity, not of volition. And *matters of fact*, where they are neither good nor evil, where they neither excite deſire nor averſion, are totally indifferent; and whether known or unknown, whether miſtaken or rightly apprehended, cannot be regarded as any motive to action.

2. What is commonly, in a popular ſenſe, called reaſon, and is ſo much recommended in moral diſcourſes, is nothing but a general and a calm paſſion, which takes a comprehenſive and a diſtant view of its object, and actuates the will, without exciting any ſenſible emotion. A man, we ſay, is diligent in his profeſſion from reaſon; that is, from a calm deſire of riches and a fortune. A man adheres to juſtice from reaſon; that is, from a calm regard to public good, or to a character with himſelf and others.

3. The ſame objects, which recommend themſelves to reaſon in this ſenſe of the word, are
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alſo the objects of what we call paſſion, when they are brought near to us, and acquire ſome other advantages, either of external ſituation, or congruity to our internal temper; and by that means excite a turbulent and ſenſible emotion. Evil, at a great diſtance, is avoided, we ſay, from reaſon: Evil, near at hand, produces averſion, horror, fear, and is the object of paſſion.

4. The common error of metaphyſicians has lain in aſcribing the direction of the will entirely to one of theſe principles, and ſuppoſing the other to have no influence. Men often act knowingly againſt their intereſt: It is not therefore the view of the greateſt poſſible good which always influences them. Men often counteract a violent paſſion, in proſecution of their diſtant intereſts and deſigns: It is therefore the preſent uneaſineſs alone, which determines them. In general, we may obſerve, that both theſe principles operate on the will; and where they are contrary, that either of them prevails, according to the general character or preſent diſpoſition of the perſon. What we call *ſtrength of mind* implies the prevalence of the calm paſſions above the violent; though we may eaſily obſerve, that there is no perſon ſo conſtantly poſſeſſed of this virtue, as never, on any occaſion, to yield to the ſolicitation of violent affection and deſire. From theſe variations of temper proceeds the great difficulty of deciding with regard to the future actions and reſolutions of men, where there is any contrariety of motives and paſſions.

SECT. VI.

1. We ſhall here enumerate ſome of thoſe circumſtances, which render a paſſion calm or violent, which heighten or diminiſh any emotion.

It is a property in human nature, that any emotion,

emotion, which attends a paſſion is eaſily converted into it; though in their natures they be originally different from, and even contrary to each other. It is true, in order to cauſe a perfect union amongſt paſſions, and make one produce the other, there is always required a double relation, according to the theory above delivered. But when two paſſions are already produced by their ſeparate cauſes, and are both preſent in the mind, they readily mingle and unite; though they have but one relation, and ſometimes without any. The predominant paſſion ſwallows up the inferior, and converts it into itſelf. The ſpirits, when once excited, eaſily receive a change in their direction; and it is natural to imagine, that change will come from the prevailing affecion. The connection is in many caſes cloſer between any two paſſions, than between any paſſion and indifference.

When a perſon is once heartily in love, the little faults and caprices of his miſtreſs, the jealouſies and quarrels, to which that commerce is ſo ſubject; however unpleaſant they be, and rather connected with anger and hatred; are yet found, in many inſtances, to give additional force to the prevailing paſſion. It is a common artifice of politicians, when they would affect any perſon very much by a matter of fact, of which they intend to inform him, firſt to excite his curioſity; delay as long as poſſible the ſatisfying of it; and by that means raiſe his anxiety and impatience to the utmoſt, before they give him a full inſight into the buſineſs. They know, that this curioſity will precipitate him into the paſſion, which they purpoſe to raiſe, and will aſſiſt the object in its influence on the mind. A ſoldier advancing to battle, is naturally inſpired with courage and confidence, when he thinks on his friends and fellow-ſoldiers; and is ſtruck with fear and terror, when he reflects on the

the enemy. Whatever new emotion therefore proceeds from the former, naturally encreaſes the courage; as the ſame emotion proceeding from the latter, augments the fear. Hence in martial diſcipline, the uniformity and luſtre of habit, the regularity of figures and motions, with all the pomp and majeſty of war, encourage ourſelves and our allies; while the ſame objects in the enemy ſtrike terror into us, though agreeable and beautiful in themſelves.

Hope is, in itſelf, an agreeable paſſion, and allied to friendſhip and benevolence; yet is it able ſometimes to blow up anger, when that is the predominant paſſion. *Spes addita ſuſcitat iras.* Virg.

2. Since paſſions, however independent, are naturally transfuſed into each other, if they be both preſent at the ſame time; it follows, that when good or evil is placed in ſuch a ſituation as to cauſe any particular emotion, beſides its direct paſſion of deſire or averſion, this latter paſſion muſt acquire new force and violence.

3. This often happens, when any object excites contrary paſſions. For it is obſervable, that an oppoſition of paſſions commonly cauſes a new emotion in the ſpirits, and produces more diſorder than the concurrence of any two affections of equal force. This new emotion is eaſily converted into the predominant paſſion, and in many inſtances, is obſerved to encreaſe its violence, beyond the pitch, at which it would have arrived, had it met with no oppoſition. Hence we naturally deſire what is forbid, and often take a pleaſure in performing actions, merely becauſe they are unlawful. The notion of duty, when oppoſite to the paſſions, is not always able to overcome them; and when it fails of that effect, is apt rather to encreaſe and irritate them, by producing an oppoſition in our motives and principles.

4. The ſame effect follows, whether the oppoſition ariſe from internal motives or external obſtacles. The paſſion commonly acquires new force in both caſes. The efforts, which the mind makes to ſurmount the obſtacle, excite the ſpirits, and enliven the paſſion.

5. Uncertainty has the ſame effect as oppoſition. The agitation of the thought, the quick turns which it makes from one view to another, the variety of paſſions which ſucceed each other, according to the different views: All theſe produce an emotion in the mind; and this emotion transfuſes itſelf into the predominant paſſion.

Security, on the contrary, diminiſhes the paſſions. The mind, when left to itſelf, immediately languiſhes; and in order to preſerve its ardour, muſt be every moment ſupported by a new flow of paſſion. For the ſame reaſon, deſpair, though contrary to ſecurity, has a like influence.

6. Nothing more powerfully excites any affection than to conceal ſome part of its object, by throwing it into a kind of ſhade, which at the ſame time that it ſhows enough to prepoſſeſs us in favour of the object, leaves ſtill ſome work for the imagination. Beſides that obſcurity is always attended with a kind of uncertainty; the effort, which the fancy makes to compleat the idea, rouzes the ſpirits, and gives an additional force to the paſſion.

7. As deſpair and ſecurity, though contrary, produce the ſame effects; ſo abſence is obbſerved to have contrary effects, and in different circumſtances, either encreaſes or diminiſhes our affection. Rochefoucault has very well remarked, that abſence deſtroys weak paſſion, but encreaſes ſtrong; as the wind extinguiſhes a candle, but blows up a fire. Long abſence naturally weakens our idea, and diminiſhes the paſſion: But where the affection is ſo ſtrong and lively as to ſupport itſelf, the uneaſineſs, ariſing from abſence, encreaſes the paſſion, and gives it new force and influence.

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8. When the ſoul applies itſelf to the performance of any action, or the conception of any object, to which it is not accuſtomed, there is a certain unpliableneſs in the faculties; and a difficulty of the ſpirits moving in their new direction. As this difficulty excites the ſpirits, it is the ſource of wonder, ſurprize, and of all the emotions, which ariſe from novelty; and is, in itſelf, agreeable, like every thing which enlivens the mind to a moderate degree. But though ſurprize be agreeable in itſelf, yet, as it puts the ſpirits in agitation, it not only augments our agreeable affections, but alſo our painful, according to the foregoing principle. Hence every thing that is new, is moſt affecting, and gives us either more pleaſure or pain, than what, ſtrictly ſpeaking, ſhould naturally follow from it. When it often returns upon us, the novelty wears off; the paſſions ſubſide; the hurry of the ſpirits is over; and we ſurvey the object with greater tranquillity.

9. The imagination and affections have a cloſe union together. The vivacity of the former gives force to the latter. Hence the proſpect of any pleaſure, with which we are acquainted, affects us more than any other pleaſure, which we may own ſuperior, but of whoſe nature we are *wholly* ignorant. Of the one we can form a particular and determinate idea: The other we conceive under the general notion of pleaſure.

Any ſatisfaction, which we lately enjoyed, and of which the memory is freſh and recent, operates on the will with more violence, than another of which the traces are decayed and almoſt obliterated.

A pleaſure, which is ſuitable to the way of life, in which we are engaged, excites more our deſire and appetite than another, which is foreign to it.

Nothing is more capable of infuſing any paſſion into the mind, than eloquence, by which objects are repreſented in the ſtrongeſt and moſt lively colours. The bare opinion of another, eſpecially

when enforced with paſſion, will cauſe an idea to have an influence upon us, though that idea might otherwiſe have been entirely neglected.

It is remarkable, that lively paſſions commonly attend a lively imagination. In this reſpect, as well as in others, the force of the paſſion depends as much on the temper of the perſon, as on the nature and ſituation of the object.

What is diſtant, either in place or time, has not equal influence with what is near and contiguous.

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I pretend not to have here exhauſted this ſubject. It is ſufficient for my purpoſe, if I have made it appear, that, in the production and conduct of paſſions, there is a certain regular mechaniſm, which is ſuſceptible of as accurate a diſquiſition, as the laws of motion, optics, hydroſtatics, or any part of natural philoſophy.

AN
ENQUIRY
CONCERNING THE
PRINCIPLES
OF
MORALS.

SECTION I.

Of the GENERAL PRINCIPLES of MORALS.

DISPUTES with men, pertinaciouſly obſtinate in their principles, are, of all others, the moſt irkſome; except, perhaps, thoſe with perſons, entirely diſingenuous, who really do not believe the opinions they defend, but engage in the controverſy, from affectation, from a ſpirit of oppoſition, or from a deſire of ſhowing wit and ingenuity, ſuperior to the reſt of mankind. The ſame blind adherence to their own arguments is to be expected in both; the ſame contempt of their antagoniſts; the ſame paſſionate vehemence, in inforcing ſophiſtry and falſehood. And as reaſoning is not the ſource, whence either diſputant derives his tenets; it is in vain to expect, that any logic, which ſpeaks not to the affections, will ever engage him to embrace ſounder principles.

Thoſe who have denied the reality of moral diſtinctions, may be ranked among the diſingenuous diſputants; nor is it conceivable, that any human creature could ever ſeriouſly believe, that all characters and actions were alike entitled to the affection and regard of every one. The difference, which nature has placed between one man and another, is ſo wide, and this difference

ference is ſtill ſo much farther widened, by education, example, and habit, that, where the oppoſite extremes come at once under our apprehenſion, there is no ſcepticiſm ſo ſcrupulous, and ſcarce any aſſurance ſo determined, as abſolutely to deny all diſtinction between them. Let a man's inſenſibility be ever ſo great, he muſt often be touched with the images of Right and Wrong; and let his prejudices be ever ſo obſtinate, he muſt obſerve, that others are ſuſceptible of like impreſſions. The only way, therefore, of converting an antagoniſt of this kind, is to leave him to himſelf. For, finding that nobody keeps up the controverſy with him, it is probable he will, at laſt, of himſelf, from mere wearineſs, come over to the ſide of common ſenſe and reaſon.

There has been a controverſy ſtarted of late, much better worth examination, concerning the general foundation of Morals; whether they be derived from Reaſon, or from Sentiment; whether we attain the knowledge of them by a chain of argument and induction, or by an immediate feeling and finer internal ſenſe; whether, like all ſound judgment of truth and falſehood, they ſhould be the ſame to every rational intelligent being; or whether, like the perception of beauty and deformity, they be founded entirely on the particular fabric and conſtitution of the human ſpecies.

The ancient philoſophers, though they often affirm, that virtue is nothing but conformity to reaſon, yet, in general, ſeem to conſider morals as deriving their exiſtence from taſte and ſentiment. On the other hand, our modern enquirers, though they alſo talk much of the beauty of virtue, and deformity of vice, yet have commonly endeavoured to account for theſe diſ-

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tinctions by metaphyſical reaſonings, and by deductions from the moſt abſtract principles of the underſtanding. Such confuſion reigned in theſe ſubjects, that an oppoſition of the greateſt conſequence could prevail between one ſyſtem and another, and even in the parts of almoſt each individual ſyſtem; and yet no body, till very lately, was ever ſenſible of it. The elegant Lord Shafteſbury, who firſt gave occaſion to remark this diſtinction, and who, in general, adhered to the principles of the ancients, is not, himſelf, entirely free from the ſame confuſion.

It muſt be acknowledged, that both ſides of the queſtion are ſuſceptible of ſpecious arguments. Moral diſtinctions, it may be ſaid, are diſcernible by pure *reaſon:* Elſe, whence the many diſputes that reign in common life, as well as in philoſophy, with regard to this ſubject: The long chain of proofs often produced on both ſides; the examples cited, the authorities appealed to, the analogies employed, the fallacies detected, the inferences drawn, and the ſeveral concluſions adjuſted to their proper principles. Truth is diſputable; not taſte: What exiſts in the nature of things is the ſtandard of our judgment; what each man feels within himſelf is the ſtandard of ſentiment. Propoſitions in geometry may be proved, ſyſtems in phyſics may be controverted; but the harmony of verſe, the tenderneſs of paſſion, the brilliancy of wit, muſt give immediate pleaſure. No man reaſons concerning another's beauty; but frequently concerning the juſtice or injuſtice of his actions. In every criminal trial the firſt object of the priſoner is to diſprove the facts alleged, and deny the actions imputed to him: The ſecond to prove, that, even if theſe actions were real, they might be juſtified, as innocent and lawful. It is confeſſedly by deductions of the underſtanding, that

that the firſt point is aſcertained: How can we ſuppoſe that a different faculty of the mind is employed in fixing the other?

On the other hand, thoſe who would reſolve all moral determinations into *ſentiment*, may endeavour to ſhow, that it is impoſſible for reaſon ever to draw concluſions of this nature. To virtue, ſay they, it belongs to be *amiable*, and vice *odious*. This forms their very nature or eſſence. But can reaſon or argumentation diſtribute theſe different epithets to any ſubjects, and pronounce before-hand, that this muſt produce love, and that hatred? Or what other reaſon can we ever aſſign for theſe affections, but the original fabric and formation of the human mind, which is naturally adapted to receive them?

The end of all moral ſpeculations is to teach us our duty; and, by proper repreſentations of the deformity of vice and beauty of virtue, beget correſpondent habits, and engage us to avoid the one, and embrace the other. But is this ever to be expected from inferences and concluſions of the underſtanding, which of themſelves have no hold of the affections, or ſet in motion the active powers of men? They diſcover truths: But where the truths which they diſcover are indifferent, and beget no deſire or averſion, they can have no influence on conduct and behaviour. What is honourable, what is fair, what is becoming, what is noble, what is generous, takes poſſeſſion of the heart, and animates us to embrace and maintain it. What is intelligible, what is evident, what is probable, what is true, procures only the cool aſſent of the underſtanding; and gratifying a ſpeculative curioſity, puts an end to our reſearches.

Extinguiſh all the warm feelings and prepoſſeſſions in favour of virtue, and all diſguſt or averſion to vice: Render men totally indifferent towards theſe diſtinctions; and morality is no longer a practical ſtudy,

nor has any tendency to regulate our lives and actions.

These arguments on each side (and many more might be produced) are so plausible, that I am apt to suspect, they may, the one as well as the other, be solid and satisfactory, and that *reason* and *sentiment* concur in almost all moral determinations and conclusions. The final sentence, it is probable, which pronounces characters and actions amiable or odious, praise-worthy or blameable; that which stamps on them the mark of honour or infamy, approbation or censure; that which renders morality an active principle, and constitutes virtue our happiness, and vice our misery: It is probable, I say, that this final sentence depends on some internal sense or feeling, which nature has made universal in the whole species. For what else can have an influence of this nature? But in order to pave the way for such a sentiment, and give a proper discernment of its object, it is often necessary, we find, that much reasoning should precede, that nice distinctions be made, just conclusions drawn, distant comparisons formed, complicated relations examined, and general facts fixed and ascertained. Some species of beauty, especially the natural kinds, on their first appearance, command our affection and approbation; and where they fail of this effect, it is impossible for any reasoning to redress their influence, or adapt them better to our taste and sentiment. But in many orders of beauty, particularly those of the finer arts, it is requisite to employ much reasoning, in order to feel the proper sentiment; and a false relish may frequently be corrected by argument and reflection. There are just grounds to conclude, that moral beauty partakes much of this latter species, and demands the assistance of our intellectual faculties, in order

der to give it a ſuitable influence on the human mind.

But though this queſtion, concerning the general principles of morals, be curious and important, it is needleſs for us, at preſent, to employ farther care in our reſearches concerning it. For if we can be ſo happy, in the courſe of this enquiry, as to diſcover the true origin of morals, it will then eaſily appear how far either ſentiment or reaſon enters into all determinations of this nature *. In order to attain this purpoſe, we ſhall endeavour to follow a very ſimple method: We ſhall analyze that complication of mental qualities, which form what, in common life, we call Perſonal Merit: We ſhall conſider every attribute of the mind, which renders a man an object either of eſteem and affection, or of hatred and contempt; every habit or ſentiment or faculty, which, if aſcribed to any perſon, implies either praiſe or blame, and may enter into any panegyric or ſatire of his character and manners. The quick ſenſibility, which, on this head, is ſo univerſal among mankind, gives a philoſopher ſufficient aſſurance, that he can never be conſiderably miſtaken in framing the catalogue, or incur any danger of miſplacing the objects of his contemplation: He needs only enter into his own breaſt for a moment, and conſider whether or not he ſhould deſire to have this or that quality aſcribed to him, and whether ſuch or ſuch an imputation would proceed from a friend or an enemy. The very nature of language guides us almoſt infallibly in forming a judgment of this nature; and as every tongue poſſeſſes one ſet of words which are taken in a good ſenſe, and another in the oppoſite, the leaſt acquaintance with the idiom ſuffices, without any reaſoning, to direct us in collecting and arranging the eſtimable or blameable

* See Appendix I.

able qualities of men. The only object of reaſoning is to diſcover the circumſtances on both ſides, which are common to theſe qualities; to obſerve that particular in which the eſtimable qualities agree on the one hand, and the blameable on the other; and thence to reach the foundation of ethics, and find thoſe univerſal principles, from which all cenſure or approbation is ultimately derived. As this is a queſtion of fact, not of abſtract ſcience, we can only expect ſucceſs, by following the experimental method, and deducing general maxims from a compariſon of particular inſtances. The other ſcientifical method, where a general abſtract principle is firſt eſtabliſhed, and is afterwards branched out into a variety of inferences and concluſions, may be more perfect in itſelf, but ſuits leſs the imperfection of human nature, and is a common ſource of illuſion and miſtake in this as well as in other ſubjects. Men are now cured of their paſſion for hypotheſes and ſyſtems in natural philoſophy, and will hearken to no arguments but thoſe which are derived from experience. It is full time they ſhould attempt a like reformation in all moral diſquiſitions; and reject every ſyſtem of ethics, however ſubtile or ingenious, which is not founded on fact and obſervation.

We ſhall begin our enquiry on this head by the conſideration of the ſocial virtues, benevolence and juſtice. The explication of them will probably give us an opening by which the others may be accounted for.

SECTION II.

Of Benevolence.

PART I.

IT may be esteemed, perhaps, a superfluous task to prove, that the benevolent or softer affections are ESTIMABLE; and wherever they appear, engage the approbation, and good-will of mankind. The epithets *sociable*, *good-natured*, *humane*, *merciful*, *grateful*, *friendly*, *generous*, *beneficent*, or their equivalents, are known in all languages, and universally express the highest merit, which *human nature* is capable of attaining. Where these amiable qualities are attended with birth and power and eminent abilities, and display themselves in the good government or useful instruction of mankind, they seem even to raise the possessors of them above the rank of *human nature*, and make them approach in some measure to the divine. Exalted capacity, undaunted courage, prosperous success; these may only expose a hero or politician to the envy and ill-will of the public: But as soon as the praises are added of humane and beneficent; when instances are displayed of lenity, tenderness, or friendship; envy itself is silent, or joins the general voice of approbation and applause.

When Pericles, the great Athenian statesman and general, was on his death-bed, his surrounding friends, deeming him now insensible, began to indulge their sorrow for their expiring patron, by enumerating his great qualities and successes, his conquests and victories, the unusual length

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of his adminiſtration, and his nine trophies erect-ed over the enemies of the republic. *You for-get*, cries the dying hero, who had heard all, *you forget the moſt eminent of my praiſes, while you dwell ſo much on thoſe vulgar advantages, in which fortune had a principal ſhare. You have not obſerved, that no citizen has ever yet worn mourning on my ac-count* *.

In men of more ordinary talents and capacity, the ſocial virtues become, if poſſible, ſtill more eſſentially requiſite; there being nothing eminent in that caſe, to compenſate for the want of them, or preſerve the perſon from our ſevereſt hatred, as well as contempt. A high ambition, an elevated courage, is apt, ſays Cicero, in leſs perfect characters, to degenerate into a turbulent ferocity. The more ſocial and ſofter virtues are there chief-ly to be regarded. Theſe are always good and amiable †.

The principal advantage, which Juvenal diſco-vers in the extenſive capacity of the human ſpe-cies is, that it renders our benevolence alſo more extenſive, and gives us larger opportunities of ſpreading our kindly influence than what are in-dulged to the inferior creation ‡. It muſt, in-deed, be confeſſed, that by doing good only, can a man truly enjoy the advantages of being emi-nent. His exalted ſtation, of itſelf, but the more expoſes him to danger and tempeſt. His ſole prerogative is to afford ſhelter to inferiors, who repoſe themſelves under his cover and protection.

But I forget, that it is not my preſent buſineſs to recommend generoſity and benevolence, or to paint, in their true colours, all the genuine charms of the ſocial virtues. Theſe, indeed, ſufficiently engage every heart, on the firſt apprehenſion of them;

* Plut. in Pericle.

† Cic. de Officiis, lib. 1.

‡ Sat. xv. 139. & ſeq.

them; and it is difficult to abſtain from ſome ſally of panegyric, as often as they occur in diſcourſe or reaſoning. But our object here being more the ſpeculative, than the practical part of morals, it will ſuffice to remark, (what will readily, I believe, be allowed) that no qualities are more intitled to the general good-will and approbation of mankind than beneficence and humanity, friendſhip and gratitude, natural affection and public ſpirit, or whatever proceeds from a tender ſympathy with others, and a generous concern for our kind and ſpecies. Theſe, wherever they appear, ſeem to transfuſe themſelves, in a manner, into each beholder, and to call forth, in their own behalf, the ſame favourable and affectionate ſentiments, which they exert on all around.

PART II.

We may obſerve, that, in diſplaying the praiſes of any humane, beneficent man, there is one circumſtance which never fails to be amply inſiſted on, namely, the happineſs and ſatisfaction, derived to ſociety from his intercourſe and good offices. To his parents, we are apt to ſay, he endears himſelf by his pious attachment and duteous care, ſtill more than by the connexions of nature. His children never feel his authority, but when employed for their advantage. With him, the ties of love are conſolidated by beneficence and friendſhip. The ties of friendſhip approach, in a fond obſervance of each obliging office, to thoſe of love and inclination. His domeſtics and dependants have in him a ſure reſource; and no longer dread the power of fortune, but ſo far as ſhe exerciſes it over him. From him the hungry receive food, the naked cloathing, the ignorant and ſlothful ſkill and induſtry. Like the ſun, an inferior miniſter of providence, he

he cheers, invigorates, and ſuſtains the ſurrounding world.

If confined to private life, the ſphere of his activity is narrower; but his influence is all benign and gentle. If exalted into a higher ſtation, mankind and poſterity reap the fruit of his labours.

As theſe topics of praiſe never fail to be employed, and with ſucceſs, where we would inſpire eſteem for any one: may it not thence be concluded, that the Utility, reſulting from the ſocial virtues, forms, at leaſt, a *part* of their merit, and is one ſource of that approbation and regard ſo univerſally paid to them?

When we recommend even an animal or a plant as *uſeful* and *beneficial*, we give it an applauſe and recommendation ſuited to its nature. As, on the other hand, reflection on the baneful influence of any of theſe inferior beings always inſpires us with the ſentiment of averſion. The eye is pleaſed with the proſpect of corn-fields and loaded vineyards; horſes grazing, and flocks paſturing: But flies the view of briars and brambles, affording ſhelter to wolves and ſerpents.

A machine, a piece of furniture, a veſtment, a houſe well contrived for uſe and conveniency, is ſo far beautiful, and is contemplated with pleaſure and approbation. An experienced eye is here ſenſible to many excellencies, which eſcape perſons ignorant and uninſtructed.

Can any thing ſtronger be ſaid in praiſe of a profeſſion, ſuch as merchandize or manufacture, than to obſerve the advantages which it procures to ſociety? And is not a monk and inquiſitor enraged when we treat his order as uſeleſs or pernicious to mankind?

The hiſtorian exults in diſplaying the benefit ariſing from his labours. The writer of romance alleviates or denies the bad conſequences aſcribed to his manner of compoſition.

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In general, what praiſe is implied in the ſimple epithet *uſeful!* What reproach in the contrary!

Your Gods, ſays Cicero *, in oppoſition to the Epicureans, cannot juſtly claim any worſhip or adoration, with whatever imaginary perfections you may ſuppoſe them endowed. They are totally uſeleſs and unactive. Even the Egyptians, whom you ſo much ridicule, never conſecrated any animal but on account of its utility.

The ſceptics aſſert †, though abſurdly, that the origin of all religious worſhip was derived from the utility of inanimate objects, as the ſun and moon, to the ſupport and well-being of mankind. This is alſo the common reaſon aſſigned by hiſtorians, for the deification of eminent heroes and legiſlators ‡.

To plant a tree, to cultivate a field, to beget children; meritorious acts, according to the religion of Zoroaſter.

In all determinations of morality, this circumſtance of public utility is ever principally in view; and wherever diſputes ariſe, either in philoſophy or common life, concerning the bounds of duty, the queſtion cannot, by any means, be decided with greater certainty, than by aſcertaining, on any ſide, the true intereſts of mankind. If any falſe opinion, embraced from appearances, has been found to prevail; as ſoon as farther experience and ſounder reaſoning have given us juſter notions of human affairs; we retract our firſt ſentiment, and adjuſt anew the boundaries of moral good and evil.

Giving alms to the common beggar is naturally praiſed; becauſe it ſeems to carry relief to the diſtreſſed and indigent: But when we obſerve the en-

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* De Nat. Deot. lib. i.

† Sext. Emp. adverſus Math. lib. viii.

‡ Diod. Sic. paſſim.

couragement thence arising to idleness and debauchery, we regard that species of charity rather as a weakness than a virtue.

Tyrannicide, or the assassination of usurpers and oppressive princes, was highly extolled in ancient times; because it both freed mankind from many of these monsters, and seemed to keep the others in awe, whom the sword or poignard could not reach. But history and experience having since convinced us, that this practice encreases the jealousy and cruelty of princes, a Timoleon and a Brutus, though treated with indulgence on account of the prejudices of their times, are now considered as very improper models for imitation.

Liberality in princes is regarded as a mark of beneficence: But when it occurs, that the homely bread of the honest and industrious is often thereby converted into delicious cates for the idle and the prodigal, we soon retract our heedless praises. The regrets of a prince, for having lost a day, were noble and generous: But had he intended to have spent it in acts of generosity to his greedy courtiers, it was better lost than misemployed after that manner.

Luxury, or a refinement on the pleasures and conveniencies of life, had long been supposed the source of every corruption in government, and the immediate cause of faction, sedition, civil wars, and the total loss of liberty. It was, therefore, universally regarded as a vice, and was an object of declamation to all satyrists, and severe moralists. Those, who prove, or attempt to prove, that such refinements rather tend to the encrease of industry, civility, and arts, regulate anew our *moral* as well as *political* sentiments, and represent, as laudable or innocent, what had formerly been regarded as pernicious and blameable.

Upon the whole, then, it seems undeniable, *that* nothing can bestow more merit on any human creature

ture than the ſentiment of benevolence in an eminent degree; and *that* a *part*, at leaſt, of its merit ariſes from its tendency to promote the intereſts of our ſpecies, and beſtow happineſs on human ſociety. We carry our view into the ſalutary conſequences of ſuch a character and diſpoſition; and whatever has ſo benign an influence, and forwards ſo deſirable an end, is beheld with complacency and pleaſure. The ſocial virtues are never regarded without their beneficial tendencies, nor viewed as barren and unfruitful. The happineſs of mankind, the order of ſociety, the harmony of families, the mutual ſupport of friends, are always conſidered as the reſult of their gentle dominion over the breaſts of men.

How conſiderable a *part* of their merit we ought to aſcribe to their utility, will better appear from future diſquiſitions *; as well as the reaſon, why this circumſtance has ſuch a command over our eſteem and approbation †.

* Sect 3d and 4th. † Sect. 5th.

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SECTION III.

Of JUSTICE.

PART I.

THAT Juſtice is uſeful to ſociety, and conſequently that *part* of its merit, at leaſt, muſt ariſe from that conſideration, it would be a ſuperfluous undertaking to prove. That public utility is the *ſole* origin of juſtice, and that reflections on the beneficial conſequences of this virtue are the *ſole* foundation of its merit; this propoſition, being more curious and important, will better deſerve our examination and enquiry.

Let us ſuppoſe, that nature has beſtowed on the human race ſuch profuſe *abundance* of all *external* conveniencies, that, without any uncertainty in the event, without any care or induſtry on our part, every individual finds himſelf fully provided with whatever his moſt voracious appetites can want, or luxurious imagination wiſh or deſire. His natural beauty, we ſhall ſuppoſe, ſurpaſſes all acquired ornaments: The perpetual clemency of the ſeaſons renders uſeleſs all cloaths or covering: The raw herbage affords him the moſt delicious fare; the clear fountain, the richeſt beverage. No laborious occupation required: No tillage: No navigation. Muſic, poetry, and contemplation form his ſole buſineſs: Converſation, mirth, and friendſhip his ſole amuſement.

It ſeems evident, that, in ſuch a happy ſtate, every other ſocial virtue would flouriſh, and receive tenfold encreaſe; but the cautious, jealous virtue of juſtice would never once have been dreamed of. For what purpoſe make a partition of goods, where every one has already more than enough? Why give riſe to property, where there cannot poſſibly be any injury? Why call this object *mine*, when, upon the ſeizing of it by another, I need but ſtretch out my hand to poſſeſs myſelf of what is equally valuable? Juſtice, in that caſe, being totally Uſeleſs, would be an idle ceremonial, and could never poſſibly have place in the catalogue of virtues.

We ſee, even in the preſent neceſſitous condition of mankind, that, wherever any benefit is beſtowed by nature in an unlimited abundance, we leave it always in common among the whole human race, and make no ſubdiviſions of right and property. Water and air, though the moſt neceſſary of all objects, are not challenged as the property of individuals; nor can any man commit injuſtice by the moſt laviſh uſe and enjoyment of theſe bleſſings. In fertile extenſive countries, with few inhabitants, land is regarded on the ſame footing. And no topic is ſo much inſiſted on by thoſe, who defend the liberty of the ſeas, as the unexhauſted uſe of them in navigation. Were the advantages, procured by navigation, as inexhauſtible, theſe reaſoners had never had any adverſaries to refute; nor had any claims ever been advanced of a ſeparate, excluſive dominion over the ocean.

It may happen, in ſome countries, at ſome periods, that there be eſtabliſhed a property in water, none in land*; if the latter be in greater abundance than can be uſed by the inhabitants, and the former be found, with difficulty, and in very ſmall quantities.

Again;

* Geneſis. chap. xiii. and xxi.

Again; ſuppoſe, that, though the neceſſities of human race continue the ſame as at preſent, yet the mind is ſo enlnrged, and ſo replete with friendſhip and generoſity, that every man has the utmoſt tenderneſs for every man, and feels no more concern for his own intereſt than for that of his fellows: It ſeems evident, that the Uſe of juſtice would, in this caſe, be ſuſpended by ſuch an extenſive benevolence, nor would the diviſions and barriers of property and obligation have ever been thought of. Why ſhould I bind another, by a deed or promiſe, to do me any good office, when I know that he is already prompted, by the ſtrongeſt inclination, to ſeek my happineſs, and would, of himſelf, perform the deſired ſervice; except the hurt, he thereby receives, be greater than the benefit accruing to me? in which caſe, he knows, that, from my innate humanity and friendſhip, I ſhould be the firſt to oppoſe myſelf to his imprudent generoſity. Why raiſe land-marks between my neighbour's field and mine, when my heart has made no diviſion between our intereſts; but ſhares all his joys and ſorrows with the ſame force and vivacity as if originally my own? Every man, upon this ſuppoſition, being a ſecond ſelf to another, would truſt all his intereſts to the diſcretion of every man; without jealouſy, without partition, without diſtinction. And the whole human race would form only one family; where all would lie in common, and be uſed freely, without regard to property; but cautiouſly too, with as entire regard to the neceſſities of each individual, as if our own intereſts were moſt intimately concerned.

In the preſent diſpoſition of the human heart, it would, perhaps, be difficult to find compleat inſtances of ſuch enlarged affections; but ſtill we may obſerve, that the caſe of families approaches towards it; and the ſtronger the mutual benevolence

lence is among the individuals, the nearer it approaches; till all diſtinction of property be, in a great meaſure, loſt and confounded among them. Between married perſons, the cement of friendſhip is by the law ſuppoſed ſo ſtrong as to aboliſh all diviſion of poſſeſſions; and has often, in reality, the force aſcribed to it. And it is obſervable, that, during the ardour of new enthuſiaſms, when every principle is inflamed into extravagance, the community of goods has frequently been attempted; and nothing but experience of its inconveniencies, from the returning or diſguiſed ſelfiſhneſs of men, could make the imprudent fanatics adopt anew the idea, of juſtice and of ſeparate property. So true is it, that this virtue derives its exiſtence entirely from its neceſſary *uſe* to the intercourſe and ſocial ſtate of mankind.

To make this truth more evident, let us reverſe the foregoing ſuppoſitions; and carrying every thing to the oppoſite extreme, conſider what would be the effect of theſe new ſituations. Suppoſe a ſociety to fall into ſuch want of all common neceſſaries, that the utmoſt frugality and induſtry cannot preſerve the greater number from periſhing, and the whole from extreme miſery: It will readily, I believe, be admitted, that the ſtrict laws of juſtice are ſuſpended, in ſuch a preſſing emergence, and give place to the ſtronger motives of neceſſity and ſelf-preſervation. Is it any crime, after a ſhipwreck, to ſeize whatever means or inſtrument of ſafety one can lay hold of, without regard to former limitations of property? Or if a city beſieged were periſhing with hunger; can we imagine, that men will ſee any means of preſervation before them, and loſe their lives, from a ſcrupulous regard to what, in other ſituations, would be the rules of equity and juſtice? The Uſe and Tendency of that virtue

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is to procure happineſs and ſecurity, by preſerving order in ſociety: But where the ſociety is ready to periſh from extreme neceſſity, no greater evil can be dreaded from violence and injuſtice; and every man may now provide for himſelf by all the means, which prudence can dictate, or humanity permit. The public, even in leſs urgent neceſſities, opens granaries, without the conſent of proprietors; as juſtly ſuppoſing, that the authority of magiſtracy may, conſiſtent with equity, extend ſo far: But were any number of men to aſſemble, without the tye of laws or civil juriſdiction; would an equal partition of bread in a famine, though effected by power and even violence, be regarded as criminal or injurious?

Suppoſe likewiſe, that it ſhould be a virtuous man's fate to fall into the ſociety of ruffians, remote from the protection of laws and government; what conduct muſt he embrace in that melancholy ſituation? he ſees ſuch a deſperate rapaciouſneſs prevail; ſuch a diſregard to equity, ſuch contempt of order, ſuch ſtupid blindneſs to future conſequences, as muſt immediately have the moſt tragical concluſion, and muſt terminate in deſtruction to the greater number, and in a total diſſolution of ſociety to the reſt. He, mean while, can have no other expedient than to arm himſelf, to whomever the ſword he ſeizes, or the buckler, may belong: To make proviſion of all means of defence and ſecurity: And his particular regard to juſtice being no longer of Uſe to his own ſafety or that of others, he muſt conſult the dictates of ſelf-preſervation alone, without concern for thoſe who no longer merit his care and attention.

When any man, even in political ſociety, renders himſelf, by his crimes, obnoxious to the public, he is puniſhed by the laws in his goods and perſon; that is, the ordinary rules of juſ-

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tice are, with regard to him, ſuſpended for a moment, and it becomes equitable to inflict on him, for the *benefit* of ſociety, what, otherwiſe, he could not ſuffer without wrong or injury.

The rage and violence of public war; what is it but a ſuſpenſion of juſtice among the warring parties, who perceive, that this virtue is now no longer of any *uſe* or advantage to them? The laws of war, which then ſucceed to thoſe of equity and juſtice, are rules calculated for the *advantage* and *utility* of that particular ſtate, in which men are now placed. And were a civilized nation engaged with barbarians, who obſerved no rules even of war; the former muſt alſo ſuſpend their obſervance of them, where they no longer ſerve to any purpoſe; and muſt render every action or rencounter as bloody and pernicious as poſſible to the firſt aggreſſors.

Thus, the rules of equity or juſtice depend entirely on the particular ſtate and condition, in which men are placed, and owe their origin and exiſtence to that Utility, which reſults to the public from their ſtrict and regular obſervance. Reverſe, in any conſiderable circumſtance, the condition of men: Produce extreme abundance or extreme neceſſity: Implant in the human breaſt perfect moderation and humanity, or perfect rapaciouſneſs and malice: By rendering juſtice totally *uſeleſs*, you thereby totally deſttoy its eſſence, and ſuſpend its obligation upon mankind.

The common ſituation of ſociety is a medium amidſt all theſe extremes. We are naturally partial to ourſelves, and to our friends; but are capable of learning the advantage reſulting from a more equitable conduct. Few enjoyments are given us from the open and liberal hand of nature; but by art, labour, and induſtry, we can

extract them in great abundance. Hence the ideas of property become neceſſary in all civil ſociety: Hence juſtice derives its uſefulneſs to the public: And hence alone ariſes its merit and moral obligation.

These concluſions are ſo natural and obvious, that they have not eſcaped even the poets, in their deſcriptions of the felicity, attending the golden age or the reign of Saturn. The ſeaſons, in that firſt period of nature, were ſo temperate, if we credit theſe agreeable fictions, that there was no neceſſity for men to provide themſelves with cloaths and houſes, as a ſecurity againſt the violence of heat and cold: The rivers flowed with wine and milk: The oaks yielded honey; and nature ſpontaneouſly produced her greateſt delicacies. Nor were theſe the chief advantages of that happy age. Tempeſts were not alone removed from nature; but thoſe more furious tempeſts were unknown to human breaſts, which now cauſe ſuch uproar, and engender ſuch confuſion. Avarice, ambition, cruelty, ſelfiſhneſs, were never heard of: Cordial affection, compaſſion, ſympathy, were the only movements with which the mind was yet acquainted. Even the punctilious diſtinction of *mine* and *thine* was baniſhed from among that happy race of mortals, and carried with it the very notion of property and obligation, juſtice and injuſtice.

This *poetical* fiction of the *golden age* is, in ſome reſpects, of a piece with the *philoſophical* fiction of the *ſtate of nature*; only that the former is repreſented as the moſt charming and moſt peaceable condition, which can poſſibly be imagined; whereas the latter is painted out as a ſtate of mutual war and violence, attended with the moſt extreme neceſſity. On the firſt origin of mankind, we are told, their ignorance and ſavage nature were ſo prevalent, that they could give

give no mutual truſt, but muſt each depend upon himſelf, and his own force or cunning for protection and ſecurity. No law was heard of: No rule of juſtice known: No diſtinction of property regarded: Power was the only meaſure of right; and a perpetual war of all againſt all was the reſult of men's untamed ſelfiſhneſs and barbarity *.

Whether ſuch a condition of human nature could ever exiſt, or if it did, could continue ſo long as to merit the appellation of a *ſtate*, may juſtly be doubted. Men are neceſſarily born in a family-ſociety, at leaſt; and are trained up by their parents to ſome rule of conduct and behaviour. But this muſt be admitted, that, if ſuch a ſtate of mutual war and violence was ever real, the ſuſpenſion of all laws of juſtice, from their abſolute inutility, is a neceſſary and infallible conſequence.

The more we vary the views of human life, and the newer and more unuſual the lights are, in which we ſurvey it, the more ſhall we be convinced, that the origin here aſſigned for the virtue of juſtice is real and ſatisfactory.

Were there a ſpecies of creatures, intermingled with men, which, though rational, were poſſeſſed of ſuch inferior ſtrength, both of body and mind, that they were incapable of all reſiſtance, and could never, upon the higheſt provocation, make us feel the effects of their reſentment; the neceſſary conſequence, I think, is, that we ſhould be bound, by the laws of humanity, to give gentle uſage to theſe creatures, but ſhould not, properly ſpeaking, lie under any reſtraint of juſtice, with regard to them, nor could they poſſeſs any right or property, excluſive of ſuch arbitrary lords. Our intercourſe with them could not be called ſociety, which ſuppoſes a degree of equality;

* See NOTE [S].

equality; but abſolute command on the one ſide, and ſervile obedience on the other. Whatever we covet, they muſt inſtantly reſign: Our permiſſion is the only tenure, by which they hold their poſſeſſions: Our compaſſion and kindneſs the only check, by which they curb our lawleſs will: And as no inconvenience ever reſults from the exerciſe of a power, ſo firmly eſtabliſhed in nature, the reſtraints of juſtice and property, being totally *uſeleſs*, would never have place in ſo unequal a confederacy.

This is plainly the ſituation of men, with regard to animals; and how far theſe may be ſaid to poſſeſs reaſon, I leave it to others to determine. The great ſuperiority of civilized Europeans above barbarous Indians, tempted us to imagine ourſelves on the ſame footing with regard to them, and made us throw off all reſtraints of juſtice, and even of humanity, in our treatment of them. In many nations, the female ſex are reduced to like ſlavery, and are rendered incapable of all property, in oppoſition to their lordly maſters. But though the males, when united, have, in all countries, bodily force ſufficient to maintain this ſevere tyranny; yet ſuch are the inſinuation, addreſs, and charms of their fair companions, that women are commonly able to break the confederacy, and ſhare with the other ſex in all the rights and privileges of ſociety.

Were the human ſpecies ſo framed by nature as that each individual poſſeſſed within himſelf every faculty, requiſite both for his own preſervation and for the propagation of his kind: Were all ſociety and intercourſe cut off between man and man, by the primary intention of the ſupreme Creator: It ſeems evident, that ſo ſolitary a being would be as much incapable of juſtice, as of ſocial diſcourſe and converſation. Where mutual

regards

regards and forbearance ſerve to no manner of purpoſe, they would never direct the conduct of any reaſonable man. The headlong courſe of the paſſions would be checked by no reflection on future conſequences. And as each man is here ſuppoſed to love himſelf alone, and to depend only on himſelf and his own activity for ſafety and happineſs, he would, on every occaſion, to the utmoſt of his power, challenge the preference above every other being, to none of which he is bound by any ties, either of nature or of intereſt.

But ſuppoſe the conjunction of the ſexes to be eſtabliſhed in nature, a family immediately ariſes; and particular rules being found requiſite for its ſubſiſtence, theſe are immediately embraced; though without comprehending the reſt of mankind within their preſcriptions. Suppoſe, that ſeveral families unite together into one ſociety, which is totally disjoined from all others, the rules, which preſerve peace and order, enlarge themſelves to the utmoſt extent of that ſociety; but becoming then entirely uſeleſs, loſe their force when carried one ſtep farther. But again ſuppoſe, that ſeveral diſtinct ſocieties maintain a kind of intercourſe for mutual convenience and advantage, the boundaries of juſtice ſtill grow larger, in proportion to the largeneſs of men's views, and the force of their mutual connexions. Hiſtory, experience, reaſon ſufficiently inſtruct us in this natural progreſs of human ſentiments, and in the gradual enlargement of our regards to juſtice, in proportion as we become acquainted with the extenſive utility of that virtue.

PART II.

If we examine the *particular* laws, by which juſtice is directed, and property determined; we ſhall ſtill

ſtill be preſented with the ſame concluſion. The good of mankind is the only object of all theſe laws and regulations. Not only it is requiſite, for the peace and intereſt of ſociety, that men's poſ-ſeſſions ſhould be ſeparated; but the rules which we follow, in making the ſeparation, are ſuch as can beſt be contrived to ſerve farther the intereſts of ſociety.

We ſhall ſuppoſe, that a creature, poſſeſſed of reaſon, but unacquainted with human nature, deliberates with himſelf what RULES of juſtice or property would beſt promote public intereſt, and eſtabliſh peace and ſecurity among mankind: His moſt obvious thought would be, to aſſign the largeſt poſſeſſions to the moſt extenſive virtue, and give every one the power of doing good, proportioned to his inclination. In a perfect theocracy, where a being, infinitely intelligent, governs by particular volitions, this rule would certainly have place, and might ſerve to the wiſeſt purpoſes: But were mankind to execute ſuch a law; ſo great is the uncertainty of merit, both from its natural obſcurity, and from the ſelf-conceit of each individual, that no determinate rule of conduct would ever reſult from it; and the total diſſolution of ſociety muſt be the immediate conſequence. Fanatics may ſuppoſe, *that dominion is founded on grace*, and *that ſaints alone inherit the earth*; but the civil magiſtrate very juſtly puts theſe ſublime theoriſts on the ſame footing with common robbers, and teaches them by the ſevereſt diſcipline, that a rule, which, in ſpeculation, may ſeem the moſt advantageous to ſociety, may yet be found, in practice, totally pernicious and deſtructive.

That there were *religious* fanatics of this kind in England, during the civil wars, we learn from hiſtory; though it is probable, that the obvious *tendency* of theſe principles excited ſuch horror in

 mankind,

mankind, as ſoon obliged the dangerous enthuſiaſts to renounce, or at leaſt conceal their tenets. Perhaps, the *levellers*, who claimed an equal diſtribution of property, were a kind of *political* fanatics which aroſe from the religious ſpecies, and more openly avowed their pretenſions; as carrying a more plauſible appearance, of being practicable in themſelves, as well as uſeful to human ſociety.

It muſt, indeed, be confeſſed, that nature is ſo liberal to mankind, that, were all her preſents equally divided among the ſpecies, and improved by art and induſtry, every individual would enjoy all the neceſſaries, and even moſt of the comforts of life; nor would ever be liable to any ills, but ſuch as might accidentally ariſe from the ſickly frame and conſtitution of his body. It muſt alſo be confeſſed, that, wherever we depart from this equality, we rob the poor of more ſatisfaction than we add to the rich, and that the ſlight gratification of a frivolous vanity, in one individual, frequently coſts more than bread to many families, and even provinces. It may appear withal, that the rule of equality, as it would be highly *uſeful*, is not altogether *impracticable*; but has taken place, at leaſt in an imperfect degree, in ſome republics; particularly that of Sparta; where it was attend, it is ſaid, with the moſt beneficial conſequences. Not to mention, that the Agrarian laws, ſo frequently claimed in Rome, and carried into execution in many Greek cities, proceeded, all of them, from a general idea of the utility of this principle.

But hiſtorians, and even common ſenſe, may inform us, that, however ſpecious theſe ideas of *perfect* equality may ſeem, they are really, at bottom, *impracticable*; and were they not ſo, would be extremely *pernicious* to human ſociety. Render poſſeſſions ever ſo equal, men's different degrees of

art,

art, care, and induſtry will immediately break that equality. Or if you check theſe virtues, you reduce ſociety to the moſt extreme indigence; and inſtead of preventing want and beggary in a few, render it unavoidable to the whole community. The moſt rigorous inquiſition too is requiſite to watch every inequality on its firſt appearance; and the moſt ſevere juriſdiction, to puniſh and redreſs it. But beſides, that ſo much authority muſt ſoon degenerate into tyranny, and be exerted with great partialities; who can poſſibly be poſſeſſed of it, in ſuch a ſituation as is here ſuppoſed? Perfect equality of poſſeſſions, deſtroying all ſubordination, weakens extremely the authority of magiſtracy, and muſt reduce all power nearly to a level, as well as property.

We may conclude, therefore, that, in order to eſtabliſh laws for the regulation of property, we muſt be acquainted with the nature and ſituation of man; muſt reject appearances, which may be falſe, though ſpecious; and muſt ſearch for thoſe rules, which are, on the whole, moſt *uſeful* and *beneficial*. Vulgar ſenſe and ſlight experience are ſufficient for this purpoſe; when men give not way to too ſelfiſh avidity, or too extenſive enthuſiaſm.

Who ſees not, for inſtance, that whatever is produced or improved by a man's art or induſtry ought, for ever, to be ſecured to him, in order to give encouragement to *uſeful* habits and accompliſhments? That the property ought alſo to deſcend to children and relations, for the ſame *uſeful* purpoſe? That it may be alienated by conſent, in order to beget that commerce and intercourſe, which is ſo *beneficial* to human ſociety? And that all contracts and promiſes ought carefully to be fulfilled, in order to ſecure mutual truſt and confidence, by which the general *intereſt* of mankind is ſo much promoted?

Examine the writers on the laws of nature; and you will always find, that, whatever principles they set out with, they are sure to terminate here at last, and to assign, as the ultimate reason for every rule which they establish, the convenience and necessities of mankind. A concession thus extorted, in opposition to systems, has more authority, than if it had been made in prosecution of them.

What other reason, indeed, could writers ever give, why this must be *mine* and that *yours*; since uninstructed nature, surely, never made any such distinction? The objects, which receive those appellations, are, of themselves, foreign to us; they are totally disjoined and separated from us; and nothing but the general interests of society can form the connexion.

Sometimes, the interests of society may require a rule of justice in a particular case; but may not determine any particular rule, among several, which are all equally beneficial. In that case, the slightest *analogies* are laid hold of, in order to prevent that indifference and ambiguity, which would be the source of perpetual dissention. Thus possession alone, and first possession, is supposed to convey property, where no body else has any preceding claim and pretension. Many of the reasonings of lawyers are of this analogical nature, and depend on very slight connexions of the imagination.

Does any one scruple, in extraordinary cases, to violate all regard to the private property of individuals, and sacrifice to public interest a distinction, which had been established for the sake of that interest? The safety of the people is the supreme law: All other particular laws are subordinate to it, and dependant on it: And if, in the *common* course of things, they be followed and regarded; it is only because the public safety and interest *commonly* demand so equal and impartial an administration.

Sometimes

Sometimes both *utility* and *analogy* fail, and leave the laws of juſtice in total uncertainty. Thus, it is highly requiſite, that preſcription or long poſſeſſion ſhould convey property; but what number of days or months or years ſhould be ſufficient for that purpoſe, it is impoſſible for reaſon alone to determine. *Civil laws* here ſupply the place of the natural *code*, and aſſign different terms for preſcription, according to the different *utilities*, propoſed by the legiſlator. Bills of exchange and promiſſory notes, by the laws of moſt countries, preſcribe ſooner than bonds, and mortgages, and contracts of a more formal nature.

In general, we may obſerve, that all queſtions of property are ſubordinate to the authority of civil laws, which extend, reſtrain, modify, and alter the rules of natural juſtice, according to the particular *convenience* of each community. The laws have, or ought to have, a conſtant reference to the conſtitution of government, the manners, the climate, the religion, the commerce, the ſituation of each ſociety. A late author of genius, as well as learning, has proſecuted this ſubject at large, and has eſtabliſhed, from theſe principles, a ſyſtem of political knowledge, which abounds in ingenious and brilliant thoughts, and is not wanting in ſolidity *.

What is a man's property? Any thing, which it is lawful for him, and for him alone, to uſe *But what rule have we, by which we can diſtinguiſh theſe objects?* Here we muſt have recourſe to ſtatutes, cuſtoms, precedents, analogies, and a hundred other circumſtances; ſome of which are conſtant and inflexible, ſome variable and arbitrary. But the ultimate point, in which they all profeſſedly terminate, is, the intereſt and happineſs

† See NOTE [O].

neſs of human ſociety. Where this enters not into conſideration, nothing can appear more whimſical, unnatural, and even ſuperſtitious, than all or moſt of the laws of juſtice and of property.

Thoſe, who ridicule vulgar ſuperſtitions, and expoſe the folly of particular regards to meats, days, places, poſtures, apparel, have an eaſy taſk; while they conſider all the qualities and relations of the objects, and diſcover no adequate cauſe for that affection or antipathy, veneration or horror, which have ſo mighty an influence over a conſiderable part of mankind. A Syrian would have ſtarved rather than taſte pigeon; an Egyptian would not have approached bacon: But if theſe ſpecies of food be examined by the ſenſes of ſight, ſmell, or taſte, or ſcrutinized by the ſciences of chymiſtry, medicine, or phyſics; no difference is ever found between them and any other ſpecies, nor can that preciſe circumſtance be pitched on, which may afford a juſt foundation for the religious paſſion. A fowl on Thurſday is lawful food; on Friday abominable: Eggs, in this houſe, and in this dioceſe, are permitted during Lent; a hundred paces farther, to eat them is a damnable ſin. This earth or building, yeſterday was profane; to-day, by the muttering of certain words, it has become holy and ſacred. Such reflections as theſe, in the mouth of a philoſopher, one may ſafely ſay, are too obvious to have any influence; becauſe they muſt always, to every man, occur at firſt ſight; and where they prevail not, of themſelves, they are ſurely obſtructed by education, prejudice, and paſſion, not by ignorance or miſtake.

It may appear to a careleſs view, or rather a too abſtracted reflection, that there enters a like ſuperſtition into all the ſentiments of juſtice; and that, if a man expoſe its object, or what we call

property,

property, to the ſame ſcrutiny of ſenſe and ſcience, he will not, by the moſt accurate enquiry, find any foundation for the difference made by moral ſentiment. I may lawfully nouriſh myſelf from this tree; but the fruit of another of the ſame ſpecies, ten paces off, it is criminal for me to touch. Had I worne this apparel an hour ago, I had merited the ſevereſt puniſhment; but a man, by pronouncing a few magical ſyllables, has now rendered it fit for my uſe and ſervice. Were this houſe placed in the neighbouring territory, it had been immoral for me to dwell in it; but being built on this ſide the river, it is ſubject to a different municipal law, and, by its becoming mine, I incur no blame or cenſure. The ſame ſpecies of reaſoning, it may be thought, which ſo ſucceſsfully expoſes ſuperſtition, is alſo applicable to juſtice; nor is it poſſible, in the one caſe more than in the other, to point out, in the object, that preciſe quality or circumſtance, which is the foundation of the ſentiment.

But there is this material difference between *ſuperſtition* and *juſtice*, that the former is frivolous, uſeleſs, and burdenſome; the latter is abſolutely requiſite to the well-being of mankind and exiſtence of ſociety. When we abſtract from this circumſtance (for it is too apparent ever to be overlooked) it muſt be confeſſed, that all regards to right and property, ſeem entirely without foundation, as much as the groſſeſt and moſt vulgar ſuperſtition. Were the intereſts of ſociety nowiſe concerned, it is as unintelligible, why another's articulating certain ſounds implying conſent, ſhould change the nature of my actions with regard to a particular object, as why the reciting of a liturgy by a prieſt, in a certain habit and poſture, ſhould dedicate a heap of brick and timber, and render it, thenceforth and for ever, ſacred *.

These

* See NOTE [U].

Theſe reflections are far from weakening the obligations of juſtice, or diminiſhing any thing from the moſt ſacred attention to property. On the contrary, ſuch ſentiment muſt acquire new force from the preſent reaſoning. For the ſtronger foundation can be deſired or conceived for any duty, than to obſerve, that human ſociety, or even human nature could ſubſiſt, without the eſtabliſhment of it; and will ſtill arrive at greater degree of happineſs and perfection, the more inviolable the regard is, which is paid to that duty?

The dilemma ſeems obvious: As juſtice evidently tends to promote public utility and to ſupport civil ſociety, the ſentiment of juſtice is either derived from our reflecting on that tendency, or like hunger, thirſt, and other appetites, reſentment, love of life, attachment to offſpring, and other paſſions, ariſes from a ſimple original inſtinct in the human breaſt, which nature has implanted for like ſalutary purpoſes. If the latter be the caſe, it follows, that property, which is the object of juſtice, is alſo diſtinguiſhed by a ſimple, original inſtinct, and is not aſcertained by any argument or reflection. But who is there that ever heard of ſuch an inſtinct? Or is this a ſubject, in which new diſcoveries can be made? We may as well expect to diſcover, in the body, new ſenſes, which had before eſcaped the obſervation of all mankind.

But farther, though it ſeems a very ſimple propoſition to ſay, that nature, by an inſtinctive ſentiment, diſtinguiſhes property, yet in reality we ſhall find, that there are required for that purpoſe ten thouſand different inſtincts, and theſe employed about objects of the greateſt intricacy and niceſt diſcernment. For when a definition of *property* is required, that relation is found to reſolve itſelf into any poſſeſſion acquired by occupation,

cupation, by induſtry, by preſcription, by inheritance, by contract, *&c.* Can we think, that nature, by an original inſtinct, inſtructs us in all theſe methods of acquiſition?

Theſe words too, inheritance and contract, ſtand for ideas infinitely complicated; and to define them exactly, a hundred volumes of laws, and a thouſand volumes of commentators, have not been found ſufficient. Does nature, whoſe inſtincts in men are all ſimple, embrace ſuch complicated and artificial objects, and create a rational creature without truſting any thing to the operation of his reaſon?

But even though all this were admitted, it would not be ſatisfactory. Poſitive laws can certainly transfer property. Is it by another original inſtinct, that we recognize the authority of kings and ſenates, and mark all the boundaries of their juriſdiction? Judges too, even though their ſentence be erroneous and illegal, muſt be allowed, for the ſake of peace and order, to have deciſive authority, and ultimately to determine property. Have we original, innate ideas of prætors and chancellors and juries? Who ſees not, that all theſe inſtitutions ariſe merely from the neceſſities of human ſociety?

All birds of the ſame ſpecies in every age and country, build their neſts alike: In this we ſee the force of inſtinct. Men, in different times and places, frame their houſes differently: Here we perceive the influence of reaſon and cuſtom. A like inference may be drawn from comparing the inſtinct of generation and the inſtitution of property.

How great ſoever the variety of municipal laws, it muſt be confeſſed, that their chief out-lines pretty regularly concur; becauſe the purpoſes, to which they tend, are every where exactly ſimilar. In like manner, all houſes have a roof and walls,

windows

windows and chimneys; though diversified in their shape, figure, and materials. The purposes of the latter, directed to the conveniencies of human life, discover not more plainly their origin from reason and reflection, than do those of the former, which point all to a like end.

I need not mention the variations, which all the rules of property receive from the finer turns and connexions of the imagination, and from the subtilties and abstractions of law-topics and reasonings. There is no possibility of reconciling this observation to the notion of original instincts.

What alone will beget a doubt concerning the theory, on which I insist, is the influence of education and acquired habits, by which we are so accustomed to blame injustice, that we are not, in every instance, conscious of any immediate reflection on the pernicious consequences of it. The views the most familiar to us are apt, for that very reason, to escape us; and what we have very frequently performed from certain motives, we are apt likewise to continue mechanically, without recalling, on every occasion, the reflections, which first determined us. The convenience, or rather necessity, which leads to justice, is so universal, and every where points so much to the same rules, that the habit takes place in all societies; and it is not without some scrutiny, that we are able to ascertain its true origin. The matter, however, is not so obscure, but that, even in common life, we have, every moment, recourse to the principal of public utility, and ask, *What must become of the world, if such practices prevail? How could society subsist under such disorders?* Were the distinction or separation of possessions entirely useless, can any one conceive, that it ever should have obtained in society?

Thus we seem, upon the whole, to have attained a knowledge of the force of that principle here insisted on, and can determine what degree of esteem

teem or moral approbation may reſult from reflections on public intereſt and utility. The neceſſity of juſtice to the ſupport of ſociety is the Sole foundation of that virtue; and ſince no moral excellence is more highly eſteemed, we may conclude, that this circumſtance of uſefulneſs has, in general, the ſtrongeſt energy, and moſt entire command over our ſentiments. It muſt, therefore, be the ſource of a conſiderable part of the merit aſcribed to humanity, benevolence, friendſhip, public ſpirit, and other ſocial virtues of that ſtamp; as it is the Sole ſource of the moral approbation paid to fidelity, juſtice, veracity, integrity, and thoſe other eſtimable and uſeful qualities and principles. It is entirely agreeable to the rules of philoſophy, and even of common reaſon; where any principle has been found to have a great force and energy in one inſtance, to aſcribe to it a like energy in all ſimilar inſtances. This indeed is Newton's chief rule of philoſophizing *.

* Principia, lib. iii.

SECTION IV.

Of Political Society.

HAD every man sufficient *sagacity* to perceive, at all times, that strong interest, which binds him to the observance of justice and equity, and *strength of mind* sufficient to persevere in a steady adherence to a general and a distant interest, in opposition to the allurements of present pleasure and advantage; there had never, in that case, been any such thing as government or political society, but each man, following his natural liberty, had lived in entire peace and harmony with all others. What need of positive law where natural justice is, of itself, a sufficient restraint? Why create magistrates, where there never arises any disorder or iniquity? Why abridge our native freedom, when, in every instance, the utmost exertion of it is found innocent and beneficial? It is evident, that, if government were totally useless, it never could have place, and that the Sole foundation of the duty of Allegiance is the *advantage*, which it procures to society, by preserving peace and order among mankind.

When a number of political societies are erected, and maintain a great intercourse together, a new set of rules are immediately discovered to be *useful* in that particular situation; and accordingly take place under the title of Laws of Nations. Of this kind are, the sacredness of the person

perſon of ambaſſadors, abſtaining from poiſoned arms, quarter in war, with others of that kind, which are plainly calculated for the *advantage* of ſtates and kingdoms, in their intercourſe with each other.

The rules of juſtice, ſuch as prevail among individuals, are not entirely ſuſpended among political ſocieties. All princes pretend a regard to the rights of other princes; and ſome no doubt, without hopocriſy. Alliances and treaties are every day made between independent ſtates, which would only be ſo much waſte of parchment, if they were not found, by experience, to have *ſome* influence and authority. But here is the difference between kingdoms and individuals. Human nature cannot, by any means, ſubſiſt, without the aſſociation of individuals; and that aſſociation never could have place, were no regard paid to the laws of equity and juſtice. Diſorder, confuſion, the war of all againſt all, are the neceſſary conſequences of ſuch a licentious conduct. But nations can ſubſiſt without intercourſe. They may even ſubſiſt, in ſome degree, under a general war. The obſervance of juſtice, though uſeful among them, is not guarded by ſo ſtrong a neceſſity as among individuals; and the *moral obligation* holds proportion with the *uſefulneſs*. All politicians will allow, and moſt philoſophers, that Reaſons of State may, in particular emergencies, diſpenſe with the rules of juſtice, and invalidate any treaty or alliance, where the ſtrict obſervance of it would be prejudicial, in a conſiderable degree, to either of the contracting parties. But nothing leſs than the moſt extreme neceſſity, it is confeſſed, can juſtify individuals in a breach of promiſe, or an invaſion of the properties of others.

In a confederated commonwealth, ſuch as the Achæan republic of old, or the Swiſs Cantons

and

and United Provinces in modern times; as the league has here a peculiar *utility*, the conditions of union have a peculiar ſacredneſs and authority, and a violation of them would be regarded as no leſs, or even as more criminal, than any private injury or injuſtice.

The long and helpleſs infancy of man requires the combination of parents for the ſubſiſtence of their young; and that combination requires the virtue of Chaſtity or fidelity to the married bed. Without ſuch a *utility*, it will readily be owned, that ſuch a virtue would never have been thought of*.

An infidelity of this nature is much more *pernicious* in *women* than in *men*. Hence the laws of chaſtity are much ſtricter over the one ſex than over the other.

Theſe rules have all a reference to generation; and yet women paſt child-bearing are no more ſuppoſed to be exempted from them than thoſe in the flower of their youth and beauty. *General rules* are often extended beyond the principle, whence they firſt ariſe; and this in all matters of taſte and ſentiment. It is a vulgar ſtory at Paris, that, during the rage of the Miſſiſſippi, a hump-backed fellow went every day into the Rue de Quincempoix, where the ſtock-jobbers met in great crowds, and was well paid for allowing them to make uſe of his hump as a deſk, in order to ſign their contracts upon it. Would the fortune, which he raiſed by this expedient, make him a handſome fellow; though it be confeſſed, that perſonal beauty ariſes very much from ideas of utility? The imagination is influenced by aſſociations of ideas; which, though they ariſe at firſt from the judgment, are not eaſily altered by every particular exception that occurs to us. To which we may add, in the preſent

* See NOTE [X].

present case of chastity, that the example of the old would be pernicious to the young; and that women, continually foreseeing that a certain time would bring them the liberty of indulgence, would naturally advance that period, and think more lightly of this whole duty, so requisite to society.

Those who live in the same family have such frequent opportunities of licence of this kind, that nothing could preserve purity of manners, were marriage allowed, among the nearest relations, or any intercourse of love between them ratified by law and custom. Incest, therefore, being *pernicious* in a superior degree, has also a superior turpitude and moral deformity annexed to it.

What is the reason, why, by the Athenian laws, one might marry a half-sister by the father, but not by the mother? Plainly this: The manners of the Athenians were so reserved, that a man was never permitted to approach the women's apartment, even in the same family, unless where he visited his own mother. His step-mother and her children were as much shut up from him as the women of any other family, and there was as little danger of any criminal correspondence between them. Uncles and nieces, for a like reason, might marry at Athens: but neither these, nor half-brothers and sisters, could contract that alliance at Rome, where the intercourse was more open between the sexes. Public utility is the cause of all these variations.

To repeat, to a man's prejudice, any thing that escaped him in private conversation, or to make any such use of his private letters, is highly blamed. The free and social intercourse of minds must be extremely checked, where no such rules of fidelity are established.

Even

Even in repeating ſtories, whence we can foreſee no ill conſequences to reſult, the giving of one's author is regarded as a piece of indiſcretion, if not of immorality. Theſe ſtories, in paſſing from hand to hand, and receiving all the uſual variations, frequently come about to the perſons concerned, and produce animoſities and quarrels among people, whoſe intentions are the moſt innocent and inoffenſive.

To pry into ſecrets, to open or even read the letters of others, to play the ſpy upon their words and looks and actions; what habits more inconvenient in ſociety? What habits, of conſequence, more blameable?

This principle is alſo the foundation of moſt of the laws of good manners; a kind of leſſer morality, calculated for the eaſe of company and converſation. Too much or too little ceremony are both blamed, and every thing, which promotes eaſe, without an indecent familiarity, is uſeful and laudable.

Conſtancy in friendſhips, attachments, and familiarities, is commendable, and is requiſite to ſupport truſt and good correſpondence in ſociety. But in places of general, though caſual concourſe, where the purſuit of health and pleaſure brings people promiſcuouſly together, public conveniency has diſpenſed with this maxim; and cuſtom there promotes an unreſerved converſation for the time, by indulging the privilege of dropping afterwards every indifferent acquaintance, without breach of civility or good manners.

Even in ſocieties, which are eſtabliſhed on principles the moſt immoral, and the moſt deſtructive to the intereſts of the general ſociety, there are required certain rules, which a ſpecies of falſe honour, as well as private intereſt, engages the members to obſerve. Robbers and pi-

rates, it has often been remarked, could not maintain their pernicious confederacy, did they not eſtabliſh a new diſtributive juſtice among themſelves, and recal thoſe laws of equity, which they have violated with the reſt of mankind.

I hate a drinking companion, ſays the Greek proverb, who never forgets. The follies of the laſt debauch ſhould be buried in eternal oblivion, in order to give full ſcope to the follies of the next.

Among nations, where an immoral gallantry, if covered with a thin veil of myſtery, is, in ſome degree, authoriſed by cuſtom, there immediately ariſe a ſet of rules, calculated for the conveniency of that attachment. The famous court or parliament of love in Provence formerly decided all difficult caſes of this nature.

In ſocieties for play, there are laws required for the conduct of the game; and theſe laws are different in each game. The foundation, I own, of ſuch ſocieties is frivolous; and the laws are in a great meaſure, though not altogether, capricious and arbitrary. So far is there a material difference between them and the rules of juſtice, fidelity, and loyalty. The general ſocieties of men are abſolutely requiſite for the ſubſiſtence of the ſpecies; and the public conveniency, which regulates morals, is inviolably eſtabliſhed in the nature of man, and of the world, in which he lives. The compariſon, therefore, in theſe reſpects, is very imperfect. We may only learn from it the neceſſity of rules, wherever men have any intercourſe with each other.

They cannot even paſs each other on the road without rules. Waggoners, coachmen, and poſtilions have principles, by which they give the way; and theſe are chiefly founded on mutual eaſe and convenience. Sometimes alſo they are arbitrary, at

at leaſt dependant on a kind of capricious analogy, like many of the reaſonings of lawyers *.

To carry the matter farther, we may obſerve, that it is impoſſible for men ſo much as to murder each other without ſtatutes, and maxims, and an idea of juſtice and honour. War has its laws as well as peace; even that ſportive kind of war, carried on among wreſtlers, boxers, cudgel-players, gladiators, is regulated by fixed principles. Common intereſt and utility beget infallibly a ſtandard of right and wrong among the parties concerned.

* See NOTE [Y].

SECTION V.

WHY UTILITY PLEASES.

PART I.

IT ſeems ſo natural a thought to aſcribe to their utility the praiſe, which we beſtow on the ſocial virtues, that one would expect to meet with this principle every where in moral writers, as the chief foundation of their reaſoning and enquiry. In common life, we may obſerve, that the circumſtance of utility is always appealed to; nor is it ſuppoſed, that a greater eulogy can be given to any man, than to diſplay his uſefulneſs to the public, and enumerate the ſervices, which he has performed to mankind and ſociety. What praiſe, even of an inanimate form, if the regularity and elegance of its parts deſtroy not its fitneſs for any uſeful purpoſe! And how ſatisfactory an apology for any diſproportion or ſeeming deformity, if we can ſhow the neceſſity of that particular conſtruction for the uſe intended! A ſhip appears more beautiful to an artiſt, or one moderately ſkilled in navigation, where its prow is wide and ſwelling beyond its poop, than if it were framed with a preciſe geometrical regularity, in contradiction to all the laws of mechanics. A building, whoſe doors and windows were exact ſquares, would hurt the eye by that very proportion; as ill adapted to the figure of a human creature,

creature, for whose service the fabric was intended. What wonder then, that a man, whose habits and conduct are hurtful to society, and dangerous or pernicious to every one who has an intercourse with him, should, on that account, be an object of disapprobation, and communicate to every spectator the strongest sentiment of disgust and hatred *.

But perhaps the difficulty of accounting for these effects of usefulness, or its contrary, has kept philosophers from admitting them into their systems of ethics, and has induced them rather to employ any other principle, in explaining the origin of moral good and evil. But it is no just reason for rejecting any principle, confirmed by experience, that we cannot give a satisfactory account of its origin, nor are able to resolve it into other more general principles. And if we would employ a little thought on the present subject, we need be at no loss to account for the influence of utility, and to deduce it from principles, the most known and avowed in human nature.

From the apparent usefulness of the social virtues, it has readily been inferred by sceptics, both ancient and modern, that all moral distinctions arise from education, and were, at first, invented, and afterward encouraged, by the art of politicians, in order to render men tractable, and subdue their natural ferocity and selfishness, which incapacitated them for society. This principle, indeed, of precept and education, must so far be owned to have a powerful influence, that it may frequently encrease or diminish, beyond their natural standard, the sentiments of approbation or dislike; and may even, in particular instances, create, without any natural principle, a new sentiment of this kind; as is evident in all superstitious practices

* See NOTE [Z].

practices and obfervances: But that *all* moral affection or diflike arifes from this origin, will never furely be allowed by any judicious enquirer. Had nature made no fuch diftinction, founded on the original conftitution of the mind, the words, *honourable*, and *fhameful*, *lovely*, and *odious*, *noble*, and *defpicable*, had never had place in any language; nor could politicians, had they invented thefe terms, ever have been able to render them intelligible, or make them convey any idea to the audience. So that nothing can be more fuperficial than this paradox of the fceptics; and it were well, if, in the abftrufer ftudies of logic and metaphyfics, we could as eafily obviate the cavils of that fect, as in the practical and more intelligible fciences of politics and morals.

The focial virtues muft, therefore, be allowed to have a natural beauty and amiablenefs, which, at firft, antecedent to all precept or education, recommends them to the efteem of uninftructed mankind, and engages their affections. And as the public utility of thefe virtues is the chief circumftance, whence they derive their merit, it follows, that the end, which they have a tendency to promote, muft be fome way agreeable to us, and take hold of fome natural affection. It muft pleafe, either from confiderations of felf-intereft, or from more generous motives and regards.

It has often been afferted, that, as every man has a ftrong connexion with fociety, and perceives the impoffibility of his folitary fubfiftence, he becomes, on that account, favourable to all thofe habits or principles, which promote order in fociety, and infure to him the quiet poffeffion of fo ineftimable a bleffing. As much as we value our own happinefs and welfare, as much muft we applaud the practice of juftice and humanity, by which alone the focial confederacy can be main-

maintained, and every man reap the fruits of mutual protection and assistance.

This deduction of morals from self-love, or a regard to private interest, is an obvious thought, and has not arisen wholly from the wanton sallies and sportive assaults of the sceptics. To mention no others, Polybius, one of the gravest and most judicious, as well as most moral writers of antiquity, has assigned this selfish origin to all our sentiments of virtue *. But though the solid, practical sense of that author, and his aversion to all vain subtilties, render his authority on the present subject very considerable; yet is not this an affair to be decided by authority, and the voice of nature and experience seems plainly to oppose the selfish theory.

We frequently bestow praise on virtuous actions, performed in very distant ages and remote countries; where the utmost subtilty of imagination would not discover any appearance of self-interest, or find any connexion of our present happiness and security with events so widely separated from us.

A generous, a brave, a noble deed, performed by an adversary, commands our approbation; while in its consequences it may be acknowledged prejudicial to our particular interest.

When private advantage concurs with general affection for virtue, we readily perceive and avow the mixture of these distinct sentiments, which have a very different feeling and influence on the mind. We praise, perhaps, with more alacrity, where the generous, humane action contributes to our particular interest: But the topics of praise, which we insist on, are very wide of this circumstance. And we may attempt to bring over

* See NOTE [AA].

over others to our ſentiments, without endeavouring to convince them, that they reap any advantage from the actions which we recommend to their approbation and applauſe.

Frame the model of a praiſe-worthy character, conſiſting of all the moſt amiable moral virtues: Give inſtances, in which theſe diſplay themſelves after an eminent and extraordinary manner: You readily engage the eſteem and approbation of all your audience, who never ſo much as enquire in what age and country the perſon lived, who poſſeſſed theſe noble qualities: A circumſtance, however, of all others, the moſt material to ſelf-love, or a concern for our own individual happineſs.

Once on a time, a ſtateſman, in the ſhock and conteſt of parties, prevailed ſo far as to procure, by his eloquence, the baniſhment of an able adverſary; whom he ſecretly followed, offering him money for ſupport during his exile, and ſoothing him with topics of conſolation in his misfortunes. *Alas!* cries the baniſhed ſtateſman, *with what regret muſt I leave my friends in this city, where even enemies are ſo generous!* Virtue, though in an enemy, here pleaſed him: And we alſo give it the juſt tribute of praiſe and approbation; nor do we retract theſe ſentiments, when we hear, that the action paſſed at Athens, about two thouſand years ago, and that the perſons names were Eſchines and Demoſthenes.

What is that to me? There are few occaſions, when this queſtion is not pertinent: And had it that univerſal, infallible influence ſuppoſed, it would turn into ridicule every compoſition, and almoſt every converſation, which contain any praiſe or cenſure of men and manners.

It is but a weak ſubterfuge, when preſſed by theſe facts and arguments, to ſay, that we tranſport ourſelves, by the force of imagination, into diſtant ages and countries, and conſider the

advantage,

advantage, which we ſhould have reaped from theſe characters, had we been contemporaries, and had any commerce with the perſons. It is not conceivable, how a *real* ſentiment or paſſion can ever ariſe from a known *imaginary* intereſt; eſpecially when our *real* intereſt is ſtill kept in view, and is often acknowledged to be entirely diſtinct from the imaginary, and even ſometimes oppoſite to it.

A man, brought to the brink of a precipice, cannot look down without trembling; and the ſentiment of *imaginary* danger actuates him, in oppoſition to the opinion and belief of *real* ſafety. But the imagination is here aſſiſted by the preſence of a ſtriking object; and yet prevails not, except it be alſo aided by novelty, and the unuſual appearance of the object. Cuſtom ſoon reconciles us to heights and precipices, and wears off theſe falſe and deluſive terrors. The reverſe is obſervable in the eſtimates, which we form of characters and manners; and the more we habituate ourſelves to an accurate ſcrutiny of morals, the more delicate feeling do we acquire of the moſt minute diſtinctions between vice and virtue. Such frequent occaſion, indeed, have we, in common life, to pronounce all kinds of moral determinations, that no object of this kind can be new or unuſual to us; nor could any *falſe* views or prepoſſeſſions maintain their ground againſt an experience, ſo common and familiar. Experience being chiefly what forms the aſſociations of ideas, it is impoſſible that any aſſociation could eſtabliſh and ſupport itſelf, in direct oppoſition to that principle.

Uſefulneſs is agreeable, and engages our approbation. This is a matter of fact, confirmed by daily obſervation. But *uſeful ?* For what? For ſome body's intereſt, ſurely. Whoſe intereſt then? Not our own only: For our approbation frequently extends

tends farther. It muſt, therefore, be the intereſt of thoſe, who are ſerved by the character or action approved of; and theſe we may conclude, however remote, are not totally indifferent to us. By opening up this principle, we ſhall diſcover one grêat ſource of moral diſtinctions.

PART II.

Self-love is a principle in human nature of ſuch extenſive energy, and the intereſt of each individual is, in general, ſo cloſely connected with that of the community, that thoſe philoſophers were excuſable, who fancied, that all our concern for the public might be reſolved into a concern for our own happineſs and preſervation. They ſaw every moment, inſtances of approbation or blame, ſatisfaction or diſpleaſure towards characters and actions; they denominated the objects of theſe ſentiments, *virtues* or *vices*; they obſerved, that the former had a tendency to encreaſe the happineſs, and the latter the miſery of mankind; they aſked, whether it were poſſible that we could have any general concern for ſociety, or any diſintereſted reſentment of the welfare or injury of others; they found it ſimpler to conſider all theſe ſentiments as modifications of ſelf-love; and they diſcovered a pretence, at leaſt, for this unity of principle, in that cloſe union of intereſt, which is ſo obſervable between the public and each individual.

But notwithſtanding this frequent confuſion of intereſts, it is eaſy to attain what natural philoſophers, after lord Bacon, have affected to call the *experimentum crucis*, or that experiment, which points out the right way in any doubt or ambiguity. We have found inſtances, in which private intereſt was ſeparate from public; in which it was even contrary: And yet we obſerved the moral ſentiment to continue, notwithſtanding this disjunction of intereſts.

interefts. And wherever thefe diftinct interefts fenfibly concurred, we always found a fenfible encreafe of the fentiment, and a more warm affection to virtue, and deteftation of vice, or what we properly call, *gratitude* and *revenge*. Compelled by thefe inftances, we muft renounce the theory, which accounts for every moral fentiment by the principle of felf-love. We muft adopt a more public affection, and allow, that the interefts of fociety are not, even on their own account, entirely indifferent to us. Ufefulnefs is only a tendency to a certain end; and it is a contradiction in terms, that any thing pleafes as means to an end, where the end itfelf no wife affects us. If ufefulnefs, therefore, be a fource of moral fentiment, and if this ufefulnefs be not always confidered with a reference to felf; it follows, that every thing, which contributes to the happinefs of fociety, recommends itfelf directly to our approbation and good-will. Here is a principle, which accounts, in great part, for the origin of morality: And what need we feek for abftrufe and remote fyftems, when there occurs one fo obvious and natural *?

Have we any difficulty to comprehend the force of humanity and benevolence? Or to conceive, that the very afpect of happinefs, joy, profperity, gives pleafure; that of pain, fuffering, forrow, communicates uneafinefs? The human countenance, fays Horace †, borrows fmiles or tears from the human countenance. Reduce a perfon to folitude, and he lofes all enjoyment, except either of the fenfual or fpeculative kind, and that becaufe the movements of his heart are not forwarded by correfpondent movements in his fellow-creatures. The figns

* See NOTE [BB].

† Uti ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adflent
Humani vultus. HOR.

ſigns of ſorrow and mourning, though arbitrary, affect us with melancholy; but the natural ſymptoms, tears and cries and groans, never fail to infuſe compaſſion and uneaſineſs. And if the effects of miſery touch us in ſo lively a manner; can we be ſuppoſed altogether inſenſible or indifferent towards its cauſes; when a malicious or treacherous character and behaviour are preſented to us?

We enter, I ſhall ſuppoſe, into a convenient, warm, well-contrived apartment: We neceſſarily receive a pleaſure from its very ſurvey; becauſe it preſents us with the pleaſing ideas of eaſe, ſatisfaction, and enjoyment. The hoſpitable, good-humoured, humane landlord appears. This circumſtance ſurely muſt embelliſh the whole; nor can we eaſily forbear reflecting, with pleaſure, on the ſatisfaction which reſults to every one from his intercourſe and good-offices.

His whole family, by the freedom, eaſe, confidence, and calm enjoyment, diffuſed over their countenances, ſufficiently expreſs their happineſs. I have a pleaſing ſympathy in the proſpect of ſo much joy, and can never conſider the ſource of it, without the moſt agreeable emotions.

He tells me, that an oppreſſive and powerful neighbour had attempted to diſpoſſeſs him of his inheritance, and had long diſturbed all his innocent and ſocial pleaſures. I feel an immediate indignation ariſe in me againſt ſuch violence and injury.

But it is no wonder, he adds, that a private wrong ſhould proceed from a man, who had enſlaved provinces, depopulated cities, and made the field and ſcaffold ſtream with human blood. I am ſtruck with horror at the proſpect of ſo much miſery, and am actuated by the ſtrongeſt antipathy againſt its author.

In

In general, it is certain, that, wherever we go, whatever we reflect on or converse about, every thing still presents us with the view of human happiness or misery, and excites in our breast a sympathetic movement of pleasure or uneasiness. In our serious occupations, in our careless amusements, this principle still exerts its active energy.

A man, who enters the theatre, is immediately struck with the view of so great a multitude, participating of one common amusement; and experiences, from their very aspect, a superior sensibility or disposition of being affected with every sentiment, which he shares with his fellow-creatures.

He observes the actors to be animated by the appearance of a full audience, and raised to a degree of enthusiasm, which they cannot command in any solitary or calm moment.

Every movement of the theatre, by a skilful poet, is communicated, as it were by magic, to the spectators; who weep, tremble, resent, rejoice, and are enflamed with all the variety of passions, which actuate the several personages of the drama.

Where any event crosses our wishes, and interrupts the happiness of the favourite characters, we feel a sensible anxiety and concern. But where their sufferings proceed from the treachery, cruelty, or tyranny of an enemy, our breasts are affected with the liveliest resentment against the author of these calamities.

It is here esteemed contrary to the rules of art to represent any thing cool and indifferent. A distant friend, or a confident, who has no immediate interest in the catastrophe, ought, if possible, to be avoided by the poet; as communicating a like indifference to the audience, and checking the progress of the passions.

Few

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Few ſpecies of poetry are more entertaining than *paſtoral*; and every one is ſenſible, that the chief ſource of its pleaſure ariſes from thoſe images of a gentle and tender tranquillity, which it repreſents in its perſonages, and of which it communicates a like ſentiment to the reader. Sannazarius, who transferred the ſcene to the ſea-ſhore, though he preſented the moſt magnificent object in nature, is confeſſed to have erred in his choice. The idea of toil, labour, and danger, ſuffered by the fiſhermen, is painful; by an unavoidable ſympathy, which attends every conception of human happineſs or miſery.

When I was twenty, ſays a French poet, Ovid was my favourite: Now I am forty, I declare for Horace. We enter, to be ſure, more readily into ſentiments, which reſemble thoſe we feel every day: But no paſſion when well repreſented, can be entirely indifferent to us; becauſe there is none, of which every man has not, within him, at leaſt the ſeeds and firſt principles. It is the buſineſs of poetry to bring every affection near to us by truth and reality: A certain proof, that, wherever that reality is found, our minds are diſpoſed to be ſtrongly affected by it.

Any recent event or piece of news, by which the fate of ſtates, provinces, or many individuals is affected, is extremely intereſting even to thoſe whoſe welfare is not immediately engaged. Such intelligence is propagated with celerity, heard with avidity, and enquired into with attention and concern. The intereſt of ſociety appears, on this occaſion, to be, in ſome degree, the intereſt of each individual. The imagination is ſure to be affected; though the paſſions excited may not always be ſo ſtrong and ſteady as to have great influence on the conduct and behaviour.

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The perusal of a history seems a calm entertainment; but would be no entertainment at all, did not our hearts beat with correspondent movements to those which are described by the historian.

Thucydides and Guicciardin support with difficulty our attention; while the former describes the trivial rencounters of the small cities of Greece, and the latter the harmless wars of Pisa. The few persons interested, and the small interest fill not the imagination, and engage not the affections. The deep distress of the numerous Athenian army before Syracuse; the danger, which so nearly threatens Venice; these excite compassion; these move terror and anxiety.

The indifferent, uninteresting stile of Suetonius, equally with the masterly pencil of Tacitus, may convince us of the cruel depravity of Nero or Tiberius: But what a difference of sentiment! While the former coldly relates the facts; and the latter sets before our eyes the venerable figures of a Soranus and a Thrasea, intrepid in their fate, and only moved by the melting sorrows of their friends and kindred. What sympathy then touches every human heart! What indignation against the tyrant, whose causeless fear or unprovoked malice gave rise to such detestable barbarity!

If we bring these subjects nearer: If we remove all suspicion of fiction and deceit: What powerful concern is excited, and how much superior, in many instances, to the narrow attachments of self-love and private interest! Popular sedition, party zeal, a devoted obedience to factious leaders; these are some of the most visible, though less laudable effects of this social sympathy in human nature.

The frivolousness of the subject too, we may observe, is not able to detach us entirely from what carries an image of human sentiment and affection.

When

When a perſon ſtutters, and pronounces with difficulty, we even ſympathize with this trivial uneaſineſs, and ſuffer for him. And it is a rule in criticiſm, that every combination of ſyllables or letters, which gives pain to the organs of ſpeech in the recital, appears alſo, from a ſpecies of ſympathy, harſh and diſagreeable to the ear. Nay, when we run over a book with our eye, we are ſenſible of ſuch unharmonious compoſition; becauſe we ſtill imagine, that a perſon recites it to us, and ſuffers from the pronunciation of theſe jarring ſounds. So delicate is our ſympathy!

Eaſy and unconſtrained poſtures and motions are always beautiful: An air of health and vigour is agreeable: Cloaths which warm, without burthening the body; which cover, without impriſoning the limbs, are well-faſhioned. In every judgment of beauty, the feelings of the perſon affected enter into conſideration, and communicate to the ſpectator ſimilar touches of pain or pleaſure *. What wonder, then, if we can pronounce no judgment concerning the character and conduct of men, without conſidering the tendencies of their actions, and the happineſs or miſery which thence ariſes to ſociety? What aſſociation of ideas would ever operate, were that principle here totally unactive †.

If any man from a cold inſenſibility, or narrow ſelfiſhneſs of temper, is unaffected with the images of human happineſs or miſery, he muſt be equally indifferent to the images of vice and virtue:

 As,

* "Decentior equus cujus aſtricta ſunt ilia; ſed idem velocior. Pulcher aſpectu ſit athleta, cujus lacertos exercitatio expreſſit; idem certamini paratior. Nunquam enim *ſpecies* ab *utilitate* dividitur. Sed hoc quidem diſcernere modici judicii eſt." QUINTILIAN Inſt. lib. viii. cap. 3.

† See NOTE [CC].

As, on the other hand, it is always found, that a warm concern for the interefts of our fpecies is attended with a delicate feeling of all moral diftinctions; a ftrong refentment of injury done to men; a lively approbation of their welfare. In this particular, though great fuperiority is obfervable of one man above another; yet none are fo entirely indifferent to the intereft of their fellow-creatures, as to perceive no diftinctions of moral good and evil, in confequence of the different tendencies of actions and principles. How, indeed, can we fuppofe it poffible in any one, who wears a human heart, that if there be fubjected to his cenfure, one character or fyftem of conduct, which is beneficial, and another, which is pernicious, to his fpecies or community, he will not fo much as give a cool preference to the former, or afcribe to it the fmalleft merit or regard? Let us fuppofe fuch a perfon ever fo felfifh; let private intereft have ingroffed ever fo much his attention; yet in inftances, where that is not concerned, he muft unavoidably feel *fome* propenfity to the good of mankind, and make it an object of choice, if every thing elfe be equal. Would any man, who is walking along, tread as willingly on another's gouty toes, whom he has no quarrel with, as on the hard flint and pavement? There is here furely a difference in the cafe. We furely take into confideration the happinefs and mifery of others, in weighing the feveral motives of action, and incline to the former, where no private regards draw us to feek our own promotion or advantage by the injury of our fellow-creatures. And if the principles of humanity are capable, in many inftances, of influencing our actions, they muft, at all times, have *fome* authority over our fentiments, and give us a general approbation of what is ufeful to fociety, and blame of what is dangerous or pernicious. The degrees of thefe fentiments may be the fubject

of

of controverſy; but the reality of their exiſtence, one ſhould think, muſt be admitted, in every theory or ſyſtem.

A creature, abſolutely malicious and ſpiteful, were there any ſuch in nature, muſt be worſe than indifferent to the images of vice and virtue. All his ſentiments muſt be inverted, and directly oppoſite to thoſe, which prevail in the human ſpecies. Whatever contributes to the good of mankind, as it croſſes the conſtant bent of his wiſhes and deſires, muſt produce uneaſineſs and diſapprobation; and on the contrary, whatever is the ſource of diſorder and miſery in ſociety, muſt, for the ſame reaſon, be regarded with pleaſure and complacency. Timon, who, probably from his affected ſpleen, more than any inveterate malice, was denominated the man-hater, embraced Alcibiades, with great fondneſs. *Go on, my boy!* cried he, *acquire the confidence of the people: You will one day, I foreſee, be the cauſe of great calamities to them* *: Could we admit the two principles of the Manicheans, it is an infallible conſequence, that their ſentiments of human actions, as well as of every thing elſe, muſt be totally oppoſite, and that every inſtance of juſtice and humanity, from its neceſſary tendency, muſt pleaſe the one deity and diſpleaſe the other. All mankind ſo far reſemble the good principle, that, where intereſt or revenge or envy perverts not our diſpoſition, we are always inclined, from our natural philanthropy, to give the preference to the happineſs of ſociety, and conſequently to virtue, above its oppoſite. Abſolute, unprovoked, diſintereſted malice has never, perhaps, place in any human breaſt; or if it had, muſt there pervert all the ſentiments of morals, as well as the feelings of humanity. If the cruelty of Nero be allowed entirely voluntary, and not rather the ef-

* PLUTARCH in vita ALC.

fect of constant fear and resentment; it is evident, that Tigellinus, preferably to Seneca or Burrhus, must have possessed his steady and uniform approbation.

A statesman or patriot, who serves our own country, in our own time, has always a more passionate regard paid to him, than one whose beneficial influence operated on distant ages or remote nations; where the good, resulting from his generous humanity, being less connected with us, seems more obscure, and affects us with a less lively sympathy. We may own the merit to be equally great, though our sentiments are not raised to an equal height, in both cases. The judgment here corrects the inequalities of our internal emotions and perceptions; in like manner, as it preserves us from error, in the several variations of images, presented to our external senses. The same object, at a double distance, really throws on the eye a picture of but half the bulk; yet we imagine that it appears of the same size in both situations; because we know, that, on our approach to it, its image would expand on the eye, and that the difference consists not in the object itself, but in our position with regard to it. And, indeed, without such a correction of appearances, both in internal and external sentiment, men could never think or talk steadily on any subject; while their fluctuating situations produce a continual variation on objects, and throw them into such different and contrary lights and positions *.

The more we converse with mankind, and the greater social intercourse we maintain, the more shall we be familiarized to these general preferences and distinctions, without which our conversation and discourse could scarcely be rendered intelligible

* See NOTE [DD].

gible to each other. Every man's intereſt is peculiar to himſelf, and the averſions and deſires, which reſult from it, cannot be ſuppoſed to affect others in a like degree. General language, therefore being formed for general uſe, muſt be moulded on ſome more general views, and muſt affix the epithets of praiſe or blame, in conformity to ſentiments, which ariſe from the general intereſts of the community. And if theſe ſentiments, in moſt men, be not ſo ſtrong as thoſe, which have a reference to private good; yet ſtill they muſt make ſome diſtinction, even in perſons the moſt depraved and ſelfiſh; and muſt attach the notion of good to a beneficent conduct, and of evil to the contrary. Sympathy, we ſhall allow, is much fainter than our concern for ourſelves, and ſympathy with perſons remote from us, much fainter than that with perſons near and contiguous; but for this very reaſon, it is neceſſary for us, in our calm judgments and diſcourſe concerning the characters of men, to neglect all theſe differences, and render our ſentiments more public and ſocial. Beſides, that we ourſelves often change our ſituation in this particular, we every day meet with perſons, who are in a ſituation different from us, and who could never converſe with us, were we to remain conſtantly in that poſition and point of view, which is peculiar to ourſelves. The intercourſe of ſentiments, therefore, in ſociety and converſation, makes us form ſome general unalterable ſtandard, by which we may approve or diſapprove of characters and manners. And though the heart takes not part entirely with thoſe general notions, nor regulates all its love and hatred, by the univerſal, abſtract differences of vice and virtue, without regard to ſelf, or the perſons with whom we are more intimately connected; yet have theſe moral differences a conſiderable influence, and being ſufficient, at leaſt,

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for discourse, serve all purposes in company, in the pulpit, on the theatre, and in the schools *.

Thus, in whatever light we take this subject, the merit, ascribed to the social virtues, appears still uniform, and arises chiefly from that regard, which the natural sentiment of benevolence engages us to pay to the interests of mankind and society. If we consider the principles of the human make, such as they appear to daily experience and observation, we must, *à priori*, conclude it impossible for such a creature as man to be totally indifferent to the well or ill-being of his fellow-creatures, and not readily, of himself, to pronounce, where nothing gives him any particular byass, that what promotes their happiness is good, what tends to their misery is evil, without any farther regard or consideration. Here then are the faint rudiments, at least, or out-lines, of a *general* distinction between actions; and in proportion as the humanity of the person is supposed to encrease, his connexion with those who are injured or benefited, and his lively conception of their misery or happiness; his consequent censure or approbation acquires proportionable vigour. There is no necessity, that a generous action, barely mentioned in an old history or remote gazette, should communicate any strong feelings of applause and admiration. Virtue, placed at such a distance, is like a fixed star, which, though to the eye of reason, it may appear as luminous as the sun in his meridian, is so infinitely removed, as to affect the senses, neither with light nor heat. Bring this virtue nearer, by our acquaintance or connexion with the persons, or even by an eloquent recital of the case; our hearts are immediately caught, our sympathy enlivened, and our cool approbation converted into the warmest sentiments of friendship and regard. These seem necessary

* See NOTE [EE].

neceſſary and infallible conſequences of the general principles of human nature, as diſcovered in common life and practice.

Again; reverſe theſe views and reaſonings: Conſider the matter *à poſteriori*; and weighing the conſequences, enquire if the merit of ſocial virtue be not, in a great meaſure, derived from the feelings of humanity, with which it affects the ſpectators. It appears to be matter of fact, that the circumſtance of *utility*, in all ſubjects, is a ſource of praiſe and approbation: That it is conſtantly appealed to in all moral deciſions concerning the merit and demerit of actions: That it is the *ſole* ſource of that high regard paid to juſtice, fidelity, honour, allegiance, and chaſtity: That it is inſeparable from all the other ſocial virtues, humanity, generoſity, charity, affability, lenity, mercy and moderation: And, in a word, that it is a foundation of the chief part of morals, which has a reference to mankind and our fellow-creatures.

It appears alſo, that, in our general approbation of characters and manners, the uſeful tendency of the ſocial virtues moves us not by any regards to ſelf-intereſt, but has an influence much more univerſal and extenſive. It appears, that a tendency to public good, and to the promoting of peace, harmony, and order in ſociety, does always, by affecting the benevolent principles of our frame, engage us on the ſide of the ſocial virtues. And it appears, as an additional confirmation, that theſe principles of humanity and ſympathy enter ſo deeply into all our ſentiments, and have ſo powerful an influence, as may enable them to excite the ſtrongeſt cenſure and applauſe. The preſent theory is the ſimple reſult of all theſe inferences, each of which ſeems founded on uniform experience and obſervation.

Were it doubtful, whether there were any ſuch principle in our nature as humanity or a concern for

for others, yet when we ſee, in numberleſs inſtances, that whatever has a tendency to promote the intereſts of ſociety, is ſo highly approved of, we ought thence to learn the force of the benevolent principle; ſince it is impoſſible for any thing to pleaſe as means to an end, where the end is totally indifferent. On the other hand, were it doubtful, whether there were, implanted in our nature, any general principle of moral blame and approbation, yet when we ſee, in numberleſs inſtances, the influence of humanity, we ought thence to conclude, that it is impoſſible, but that every thing, which promotes the intereſt of ſociety, muſt communicate pleaſure, and what is pernicious give uneaſineſs. But when theſe different reflections and obſervations concur in eſtabliſhing the ſame concluſion, muſt they not beſtow an undiſputed evidence upon it?

It is however hoped, that the progreſs of this argument will bring a farther confirmation of the preſent theory, by ſhowing the riſe of other ſentiments of eſteem and regard from the ſame or like principles.

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SECTION VI.

Of QUALITIES USEFUL to OURSELVES.

PART I.

IT ſeems evident, that where a quality or habit is ſubjected to our examination, if it appear, in any reſpect, prejudicial to the perſon poſſeſſed of it, or ſuch as incapacitates him for buſineſs and action, it is inſtantly blamed, and ranked among his faults and imperfections. Indolence, negligence, want of order and method, obſtinacy, fickleneſs, credulity; theſe qualities were never eſteemed by any one indifferent to a character; much leſs, extolled as accompliſhments or virtues. The prejudice, reſulting from them, immediately ſtrikes our eye, and gives us the ſentiment of pain and diſapprobation.

No quality, it is allowed, is abſolutely either blameable or praiſe-worthy. It is all according to its degree. A due medium, ſay the Peripatetics, is the characteriſtic of virtue. But this medium is chiefly determined by utility. A proper celerity, for inſtance, and diſpatch in buſineſs, is commendable. When defective, no progreſs is ever made in the execution of any purpoſe: When exceſſive, it engages us in precipitate and ill-concerted meaſures and enterpriſes: By

By ſuch reaſonings, we fix the proper and commendable mediocrity in all moral and prudential diſquiſitions; and never loſe view of the advantages, which reſult from any character or habit.

Now as theſe advantages are enjoyed by the perſon poſſeſſed of the character, it can never be *ſelf-love* which renders the proſpect of them agreeable to us, the ſpectators, and prompts our eſteem and aprobation. No force of imagination can convert us into another perſon, and make us fancy, that we being that perſon, reap benefit from thoſe valuable qualities, which belong to him. Or if it did, no celerity of imagination could immediately tranſport us back, into ourſelves, and make us love and eſteem the perſon, as different from us. Views and ſentiments, ſo oppoſite to known truth, and to each other, could never have place, at the ſame time, in the ſame perſon. All ſuſpicion, therefore, of ſelfiſh regards, is here totally excluded. It is a quite different principle, which actuates our boſom, and intereſts us in the felicity of the perſon whom we contemplate. Where his natural talents and acquired abilities give us the proſpect of elevation, advancement, a figure in life, proſperous ſucceſs, a ſteady command over fortune, and the connexion of great or advantageous undertakings; we are ſtruck with ſuch agreeable images, and feel a complacency and regard immediately ariſe towards him. The ideas of happineſs, joy, triumph, proſperity, are connected with every circumſtance of his character, and diffuſe over our minds a pleaſing ſentiment of ſympathy and humanity*.

Let us ſuppoſe a perſon originally framed ſo as to have no manner of concern for his fellow-creatures, but to regard the happineſs and miſery

* See NOTE [FF].

miſery of all ſenſible beings with greater indifference than even two contiguous ſhades of the ſame colour. Let us ſuppoſe, if the proſperity of nations were laid on the one hand, and their ruin on the other, and he were deſired to chooſe; that he would ſtand, like the ſchoolman's aſs, irreſolute and undetermined, between equal motives; or rather, like the ſame aſs between two pieces of wood or marble, without any inclination or propenſity to either ſide. The conſequence, I believe, muſt be allowed juſt, that ſuch a perſon, being abſolutely unconcerned, either for the public good of a community or the private utility of others, would look on every quality, however pernicious, or however beneficial, to ſociety, or to its poſſeſſor, as on the moſt common and unintereſting object.

But if, inſtead of this fancied monſter, we ſuppoſe a *man* to form a judgment or determination in the caſe, there is to him a plain foundation of preference, where every thing elſe is equal; and however cool his choice may be, if his heart be ſelfiſh, or if the perſons intereſted be remote from him; there muſt ſtill be a choice or diſtinction between what is uſeful, and what is pernicious. Now this diſtinction is the ſame in all its parts, with the *moral diſtinction*, whoſe foundation has been ſo often, and ſo much in vain, enquired after. The ſame endowments of the mind, in every circumſtance, are agreeable to the ſentiment of morals and to that of humanity; the ſame temper is ſuſceptible of high degrees of the one ſentiment and of the other; and the ſame alteration in the objects, by their nearer approach or by connexions, enlivens the one and the other. By all the rules of philoſophy, therefore, we muſt conclude, that theſe ſentiments are originally the ſame; ſince, in each particular, even the moſt minute, they

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are governed by the ſame laws, and are moved by the ſame objects.

Why do philoſophers infer, with the greateſt certainty, that the moon is kept in its orbit by the ſame force of gravity, that makes bodies fall near the ſurface of the earth, but becauſe theſe effects are, upon computation, found ſimilar and equal? And muſt not this argument bring as ſtrong conviction, in moral as in natural diſquiſitions?

To prove, by any long detail, that all the qualities, uſeful to the poſſeſſor, are approved of, and the contrary cenſured, would be ſuperfluous. The leaſt reflection on what is every day experienced in life, will be ſufficient. We ſhall only mention a few inſtances, in order to remove, if poſſible, all doubt and heſitation,

The quality, the moſt neceſſary for the execution of any uſeful enterpriſe, is Diſcretion; by which we carry on a ſafe intercourſe with others, give due attention to our own and to their character, weigh each circumſtance of the buſineſs which we undertake, and employ the ſureſt and ſafeſt means for the attainment of any end or purpoſe. To a Cromwell, perhaps, or a De Retz, diſcretion may appear an alderman-like virtue, as Dr. Swift calls it; and being incompatible with thoſe vaſt deſigns, to which their courage and ambition prompted them, it might really, in them, be a fault or imperfection. But in the conduct of ordinary life, no virtue is more requiſite, not only to obtain ſucceſs, but to avoid the moſt fatal miſcarriages and diſappointments. The greateſt parts without it, as obſerved by an elegant writer, may be fatal to their owner; as Polyphemus, deprived of his eye, was only the more expoſed, on account of his enormous ſtrength and ſtature.

The beſt character, indeed, were it not rather

too perfect for human nature, is that which is not ſwayed by temper of any kind; but alternately employs enterpriſe and caution, as each is *uſeful* to the particular purpoſe intended. Such is the excellence which St. Evremond aſcribes to mareſchal Turenne, who diſplayed every campaign, as he grew older, more temerity in his military enterpriſes; and being now, from long experience, perfectly acquainted with every incident in war, he advanced with greater firmneſs and ſecurity, in a road ſo well known to him. Fabius, ſays Machiavel, was cautious; Scipio enterpriſing: And both ſucceeded, becauſe the ſituation of the Roman affairs, during the command of each, was peculiarly adapted to his genius? but both would have failed, had theſe ſituations been reverſed. He is happy, whoſe circumſtances ſuit his temper; but he is more excellent, who can ſuit his temper to any circumſtances.

What need is there to diſplay the praiſes of Induſtry, and to extol its advantages, in the acquiſition of power and riches. or in raiſing what we call a *fortune* in the world? The tortoiſe, according to the fable, by his perſeverance, gained the race of the hare, though poſſeſſed of much ſuperior ſwiftneſs. A man's time, when well huſbanded, is like a cultivated field, of which a few acres produce more of what is uſeful to life, than extenſive provinces, even of the richeſt ſoil, when over-run with weeds and brambles.

But all proſpect of ſucceſs in life, or even of tolerable ſubſiſtence, muſt fail, where a reaſonable Frugality is wanting. The heap, inſtead of encreaſing, diminiſhes daily, and leaves its poſſeſſor ſo much more unhappy, as, not having been able to confine his expences to a large revenue, he will ſtill leſs be able to live contentedly on a ſmall one. The ſouls of men, according to Plato,

Plato †, inflamed with impure apperites, and losing the body, which alone afforded means of satisfaction, hover about the earth, and haunt the places, where their bodies are deposited; possessed with a longing desire to recover the lost organs of sensation. So may we see worthless prodigals, having consumed their fortune in wild debauches, thrusting themselves into every plentiful table, and every party of pleasure, hated even by the vicious, and despised even by fools.

The one extreme of frugality is *avarice*, which, as it both deprives a man of all use of his riches, and checks hospitality and every social enjoyment, is justly censured on a double account. *Prodigality*, the other extreme, is commonly more hurtful to a man himself; and each of these extremes is blamed above the other, according to the temper of the person who censures, and according to his greater or less sensibility to pleasure, either social or sensual.

Qualities often derive their merit from complicated sources. *Honesty*, *fidelity*, *truth*, are praised for their immediate tendency to promote the interest of society; but after those virtues are once established upon this foundation, they are also considered as advantageous to the person himself, and as the source of that trust and confidence, which can alone give a man any consideration in life. One becomes contemptible, no less than odious, when he forgets the duty, which, in this particular, he owes to himself as well as to society.

Perhaps, this consideration is one *chief* source of the high blame, which is thrown on any instance of failure among women in point of *chastity*. The greatest regard, which can be acquired by that sex, is derived from their fidelity; and a woman becomes cheap and vulgar, loses her rank,

† Phædo.

rank, and is exposed to every insult, who is deficient in this particular. The smallest failure is here sufficient to blast her character. A female has so many opportunities of secretly indulging these appetites, that nothing can give us security but her absolute modesty and reserve; and where a breach is once made, it can scarcely ever be fully repaired. If a man behave with cowardice on one occasion, a contrary conduct reinstates him in his character. But by what action can a woman, whose behaviour has once been dissolute, be able to assure us, that she has formed better resolutions, and has self-command enough to carry them into execution?

All men, it is allowed, are equally desirous of happiness; but few are successful in the pursuit: One considerable cause is the want of Strength of Mind, which might enable them to resist the temptation of present ease or pleasure, and carry them forward in the search of more distant profit and enjoyment. Our affections, on a general prospect of their objects, form certain rules of conduct, and certain measures of preference of one above another: And these decisions, though really the result of our calm passions and propensities, (for what else can pronounce any object eligible or the contrary?) are yet said, by a natural abuse of terms, to be the determinations of pure *reason* and reflection. But when some of these objects approach nearer to us, or acquire the advantages of favourable lights and positions, which catch the heart or imagination; our general resolutions are frequently confounded, a small enjoyment preferred, and lasting shame and sorrow entailed upon us. And however poets may employ their wit and eloquence, in celebrating present pleasure, and rejecting all distant views to fame, health, or fortune; it is obvious, that this practice is the source of all dissoluteness

ſolutuneſs and diſorder, repentance and miſery. A man of a ſtrong and determined temper adheres tenaciouſly to his general reſolutions, and is neither ſeduced by the allurements of pleaſure, nor terrified by the menaces of pain; but keeps ſtill in view thoſe diſtant purſuits, by which he, at once, enſures his happineſs and his honour.

Self-ſatisfaction, at leaſt in ſome degree, is an advantage, which equally attends the Fool and the Wiſe Man: But it is the only one; nor is there any other circumſtance in the conduct of life, where they are upon an equal footing. Buſineſs, books, converſation; for all theſe, a fool is totally incapacitated, and except condemned by his ſtation to the coarſeſt drudgery, remains a *uſeleſs* burden upon the earth. Accordingly, it is found, that men are extremely jealous of their character in this particular; and many inſtances are ſeen of profligacy and treachery, the moſt avowed and unreſerved; none of bearing patiently the imputation of ignorance and ſtupidity. Dicaearchus, the Macedonian general, who, as Polybius tells us*, openly erected one altar to impiety, another to injuſtice, in order to bid defiance to mankind; even he, I am well aſſured, would have ſtarted at the epithet of *fool*, and have meditated revenge for ſo injurious an appellation. Except the affection of parents, the ſtrongeſt and moſt indiſſoluble bond in nature, no connexion has ſtrength ſufficient to ſupport the diſguſt ariſing from this character. Love itſelf, which can ſubſiſt under treachery, ingratitude, malice, and infidelity, is immediately extinguiſhed by it, when perceived and acknowledged; nor are deformity and old age more fatal to the dominion of that paſſion. So dreadful are the ideas of an utter incapacity for any purpoſe

* Lib. xvii. cap. 35.

poſe or undertaking, and of continued error and miſconduct in life!

When it is aſked, whether a quick or a ſlow apprehenſion be moſt valuable? Whether one, that, at firſt view, penetrates far into a ſubject, but can perform nothing upon ſtudy; or a contrary character, which muſt work out every thing by dint of application? Whether a profound genius or a ſure judgment? In ſhort, what charaacter, or peculiar turn of underſtanding is more excellent than another? It is evident, that we can anſwer none of theſe queſtions, without conſidering which of thoſe qualities capacitates a man beſt for the world, and carries him fartheſt in any undertaking.

If refined ſenſe and exalted ſenſe be not ſo *uſeful* as common ſenſe, their rarity, their novelty, and the nobleneſs of their objects make ſome compenſation, and render them the admiration of mankind: As gold, though leſs ſerviceable than iron, acquires, from its ſcarcity, a value, which is much ſuperior.

The defects of judgment can be ſupplied by no art or invention; but thoſe of Memory frequently may, both in buſineſs and in ſtudy, by method and induſtry, and by diligence in committing every thing to writing; and we ſcarcely ever hear a ſhort memory given as a reaſon for a man's failure in any undertaking. But in ancient times, when no man could make a figure without the talent of ſpeaking, and when the audience were too delicate to bear ſuch crude, undigeſted harangues as our extemporary orators offer to public aſſemblies; the faculty of memory was then of the utmoſt conſequence, and was accordingly much more valued than at preſent. Scarce any great genius is mentioned in antiquity, who is not celebrated for this talent; and

 Cicero

Cicero enumerates it among the other sublime qualities of Cæsar himself †.

Particular customs and manners alter the usefulness of qualities: They also alter their merit. Particular situations and accidents have, in some degree, the same influence. He will always be more esteemed, who possesses those talents and accomplishments, which suit his station and profession, than he whom fortune has misplaced in the part which she has assigned him. The private or selfish virtues are, in this respect, more arbitrary than the public and social. In other respects, they are, perhaps, less liable to doubt and controversy.

In this kingdom, such continued ostentation, of late years, has prevailed among men in *active* life with regard to *public spirit*, and among those in *speculative* with regard to *benevolence*; and so many false pretensions to each have been, no doubt, detected, that men of the world are apt, without any bad intention, to discover a sullen incredulity on the head of those moral endowments, and even sometimes absolutely to deny their existence and reality. In like manner, I find, that, of old, the perpetual cant of the *Stoics* and *Cynics* concerning *virtue*, their magnificent professions and slender performances, bred a disgust in mankind; and Lucian, who, though licentious with regard to pleasure, is yet, in other respects, a very moral writer, cannot, sometimes, talk of virtue, so much boasted, without betraying symptoms of spleen and irony*. But surely this

† Fuit in illo ingenium, ratio, memoria, literæ, cura, cogitatio, diligentia, &c. PHILIP. 2.

* Αρετην τινα και ασωματα και ληρȣς μεγαλη τη φωνη ξυνειροντων. LUC. TIMON. Again, Και συναγαγοντες (οι φιλοσοφοι) ευξαπατητα μειρακια την τε πολυθρυλλητον αρετην τραγωδȣσι. ICURO-MEN. In another place, Ηȣπ γαρ εστιν η πολυθρυλλητος αρετη, ἢ φυσις, και ειμαρμενη, και τυχη, ανυπος ατα και κενα πραγματων ονοματα. Deor. Concil.

this peevish delicacy, whence-ever it arises, can never be carried so far as to make us deny the existence of every species of merit, and all distinction of manners and behaviour. Besides *discretion*, *caution*, *enterprise*, *industry*, *assiduity*, *frugality*, *œconomy*, *good-sense*, *prudence*, *discernment*; besides these endowments, I say, whose very names force an avowal of their merit, there are many others, to which the most determined scepticism cannot, for a moment refuse the tribute of praise and approbation. *Temperance*, *sobriety*, *patience*, *constancy*, *perseverance*, *forethought*, *considerateness*, *secrecy*, *order*, *insinuation*, *address*, *presence of mind*, *quickness of conception*, *facility of expression*; these, and a thousand more of the same kind, no man will ever deny to be excellencies and perfections. As their merit consists in their tendency to serve the person, possessed of them, without any magnificent claim to public and social desert, we are the less jealous of their pretensions, and readily admit them into the catalogue of laudable qualities. We are not sensible, that, by this concession, we have paved the way for all the other moral excellencies, and cannot consistently hesitate any longer, with regard to disinterested benevolence, patriotism, and humanity.

It seems, indeed, certain, that first appearances are here, as usual, extremely deceitful, and that it is more difficult, in a speculative way, to resolve into self-love the merit, which we ascribe to the selfish virtues above-mentioned, than that even of the social virtues, justice and beneficence. For this latter purpose, we need but say, that whatever conduct promotes the good of the community is loved, praised, and esteemed by the community, on account of that utility and interest, of which every one partakes: And though this affection and regard be, in reality, gratitude, not self-love, yet a distinction, even of this ob-

vious nature, may not readily be made by superficial reaſoners; and there is room, at leaſt, to ſupport the cavil and diſpute for a moment. But as qualities, which tend only to the utility of their poſſeſſor, without any reference to us, or to the community, are yet eſteemed and valued; by what theory or ſyſtem can we account for this ſentiment from ſelf-love, or deduce it from that favourite origin? There ſeems here a neceſſity for confeſſing that the happineſs and miſery of others are not ſpectacles entirely indifferent to us; but that the view of the former, whether in its cauſes or effects, like ſun-ſhine or the proſpect of well-cultivated plains, (to carry our pretenſions no higher) communicates a ſecret joy and ſatisfaction; the appearance of the latter, like a lowering cloud or barren landſkip, throws a melancholy damp over the imagination. And this conceſſion being once made, the difficulty is over; and a natural unforced interpretation of the phænomena of human life will afterwards, we may hope, prevail among all ſpeculative enquirers.

PART II.

It may not be improper, in this place, to examine the influence of bodily endowments, and of the goods of fortune, over our ſentiments of regard and eſteem, and to conſider whether theſe phænomena fortify or weaken the preſent theory. It will naturally be expected, that the beauty of the body, as is ſuppoſed by all ancient moraliſts, will be ſimilar, in ſome reſpects, to that of the mind; and that every kind of eſteem, which is paid to a man, will have ſomething ſimilar in its origin, whether it ariſe from his mental endowments, or from the ſituation of his exterior circumſtances.

It

It is evident, that one conſiderable ſource of *beauty* in all animals is the advantage, which, they reap from the particular ſtructure of their limbs and members, ſuitably to the particular manner of life, to which they are by nature deſtined. The juſt proportions of a horſe, deſcribed by Xenophon and Virgil, are the ſame, that are received at this day by our modern jockeys; becauſe the foundation of them is the ſame, namely, experience of what is detrimental or uſeful in the animal.

Broad ſhoulders, a lank belly, firm joints, taper legs; all theſe are beautiful in our ſpecies, becauſe ſigns of force and vigour. Ideas of utility and its contrary, though they do not entirely determine what is handſome or deformed, are evidently the ſource of a conſiderable part of approbation or diſlike.

In ancient times, bodily ſtrength and dexterity, being of greater *uſe* and importance in war, was alſo much more eſteemed and valued, than at preſent. Not to inſiſt on Homer and the poets, we may obſerve, that hiſtorians ſcruple not to mention *force of body* among the other accompliſhments even of Epaminondas, whom they acknowledge to be the greateſt hero, ſtateſman, and general of all the Greeks*. A like praiſe is given to Pompey, one of the greateſt of the Romans†. This inſtance is ſimilar to what we obſerved above, with regard to memory.

What deriſion and contempt, with both ſexes, attend *impotence*; while the unhappy object is regarded as one deprived of ſo capital a pleaſure in life, and at the ſame time, as diſabled from communicating it to others. *Barrenneſs* in women,

* See NOTE [GG].

† *Cum alacribus, ſaltu; cum velocibus, curſu; cum validis recte certabat.* Sallust apud Veget.

men, being alſo a ſpecies of *inutility*, is a reproach, but not in the ſame degree: of which the reaſon is obvious, according to the preſent theory.

There is no rule in painting or ſtatuary more indiſpenſible than that of balancing the figures, and placing them with the grateſt exactneſs on their proper center of gravity. A figure, which is not juſtly balanced, is ugly; becauſe it conveys the diſagreeable ideas of fall, harm, and pain*.

A diſpoſition or turn of mind, which qualifies a man to riſe in the world, and advance his fortune, is entitled to eſteem and regard, as has already been explained. It may therefore, naturally be ſuppoſed, that the actual poſſeſſion of riches and authority will have a conſiderable influence over theſe ſentiments.

Let us examine any hypotheſis, by which we can account for the regard paid to the rich and powerful: We ſhall find none ſatisfactory, but that which derives it from the enjoyment communicated to the ſpectator by the images of proſperity, happineſs, eaſe, plenty, authority, and the gratification of every appetite. Self-love, for inſtance, which ſome affect ſo much to conſider as the ſource of every ſentiment, is plainly inſufficient for this purpoſe. Where no good-will or friendſhip appears, it is difficult to conceive on what we can found our hope of advantage from the riches of others; though we naturally reſpect the rich, even before they diſcover any ſuch favourable diſpoſition towards us.

We are affected with the ſame ſentiments, when we lie ſo much out of the ſphere of their activity, that they cannot even be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs the power of ſerving us. A priſoner of war, in all civilized nations, is treated with a regard ſuited

† See NOTE [HH].

ſuited to his condition; and riches, it is evident, go far towards fixing the condition of any perſon. If birth and quality enter for a ſhare, this ſtill affords us an argument to our preſent purpoſe. For what is it we call a man of birth, but one who is deſcended from a long ſucceſſion of rich and powerful anceſtors, and who acquires our eſteem by his connexion with perſons whom we eſteem? His anceſtors, therefore, though dead, are reſpected, in ſome meaſure, on account of their riches; and conſequently, without any kind of expectation.

But not to go ſo far as priſoners of war or the dead, to find inſtances of this diſintereſted regard for riches; we may only obſerve, with a little attention, thoſe phænomena, which occur in common life and converſation. A man, who is himſelf, we ſhall ſuppoſe, of a competent fortune, and of no profeſſion, being introduced to a company of ſtrangers, naturally treats them with different degrees of reſpect, as he is informed of their different fortunes and conditions; though it is impoſſible that he can ſo ſuddenly propoſe, and perhaps he would not accept of, any pecuniary advantage from them. A traveller is always admitted into company, and meets with civility, in proportion as his train and equipage ſpeak him a man of great or moderate fortune. In ſhort, the different ranks of men are, in a great meaſure, regulated by riches; and that with regard to ſuperiors as well as inferiors, ſtrangers as well as acquaintance.

What remains, therefore, but to conclude, that, as riches are deſired for ourſelves only as the means of gratifying our appetites, either at preſent or in ſome imaginary future period; they beget eſteem in others merely from their having that influence. This indeed is their very nature or eſſence: They have a direct reference to the commodities,

commodities, conveniencies, and pleaſures of life. The bill of a banker, who is broke, or gold in a deſart iſland, would otherwiſe be full as valuable. When we approach a man, who is, as we ſay, at his eaſe, we are preſented with the pleaſing ideas of plenty, ſatisfaction, cleanlineſs, warmth; a chearful houſe, elegant furniture, ready ſervice, and whatever is deſirable in meat, drink, or apparel. On the contrary, when a poor man appears, the diſagreeable images of want, penury, hard labour, dirty furniture, coarſe or ragged cloaths, nauſeous meat and diſtaſteful liquor, immediately ſtrike our fancy. What elſe do we mean by ſaying that one is rich, the other poor? And as regard or contempt is the natural conſequence of thoſe different ſituations in life; it is eaſily ſeen what additional light and evidence this throws on our preceding theory, with regard to all moral diſtinctions*.

A man, who has cured himſelf of all ridiculous prepoſſeſſions, and is fully, ſincerely, and ſteadily convinced, from experience as well as philoſophy, that the difference of fortune makes leſs difference in happineſs than is vulgarly imagined; ſuch a one does not meaſure out degrees of eſteem according to the rent-rolls of his acquaintance. He may, indeed, externally pay a ſuperior deference to the great lord above the vaſſal; becauſe riches are the moſt convenient, being the moſt fixed and determinate, ſource of diſtinction: But his internal ſentiments are more regulated by the perſonal characters of men, than by the accidental and capricious favours of fortune.

In moſt countries of Europe, family, that is, hereditary riches, marked with titles and ſymbols from the ſovereign, is the chief ſource of diſtinction. In England, more regard is paid to preſent opulence and plenty. Each practice has its advantages and diſadvantages.

* See NOTE [II].

difadvantages. Where birth is refpected, unactive, fpiritlefs minds remain in haughty indolence, and dream of nothing but pedigrees and genealogies: The generous and ambitious feek honour and authority and reputation and favour. Where riches are the chief idol, corruption, venality, rapine prevail: Arts, manufactures, commerce, agriculture flourifh. The former prejudice, being favourable to military virtue, is more fuited to monarchies. The latter, being the chief fpur to induftry, agrees better with a republican government. And we accordingly find, that each of thefe forms of government, by varying the *utility* of thofe cuftoms, has commonly a proportionable effect on the fentiments of mankind.

SECTION

SECTION VII.

Of QUALITIES IMMEDIATELY AGREEABLE to OURSELVES.

WHOEVER has paſſed an evening with ſerious melancholy people, and has obſerved how ſuddenly the converſation was animated, and what ſprightlineſs diffuſed itſelf over the countenance, diſcourſe, and behaviour of every one, on the acceſſion of a good-humoured, lively companion; ſuch a one will eaſily allow, that Chearfulneſs carries great merit with it, and naturally conciliates the good-will of mankind. No quality, indeed, more readily communicates itſelf to all around; becauſe no one has a greater propenſity to diſplay itſelf, in jovial talk and pleaſant entertainment. The flame ſpreads through the whole circle; and the moſt ſullen and moroſe are often caught by it. That the melancholy hate the merry, even though Horace ſays it, I have ſome difficulty to allow; becauſe I have always obſerved, that, where the jollity is moderate and decent, ſerious people are ſo much the more delighted, as it diſſipates the gloom, with which they are commonly oppreſſed: and gives them an unuſual enjoyment.

From this influence of chearfulneſs, both to communicate itſelf, and to engage approbation, we may perceive, that there is another ſet of mental qualities, which, without any utility or any

any tendency to farther good, either of the community or of the possessor, diffuse a satisfaction on the beholders, and procure friendship and regard. Their immediate sensation, to the person possessed of them, is agreeable: Others enter into the same humour, and catch the sentiment, by a contagion or natural sympathy: And as we cannot forbear loving whatever pleases, a kindly emotion arises towards the person, who communicates so much satisfaction. He is a more animating spectacle: His presence diffuses over us more serene complacency and enjoyment: Our imagination, entering into his feelings and disposition, is affected in a more agreeable manner, than if a melancholy, dejected, sullen, anxious temper were presented to us. Hence the affection and approbation, which attend the former: The aversion and disgust, with which we regard the latter *.

Few men would envy the character, which Cæsar gives of Cassius.

He loves no play,
As thou do'st, Anthony: He hears no music:
Seldom he smiles; and smiles in such a sort,
As if he mock'd himself, and scorn'd his spirit
That could be mov'd to smile at any thing.

Not only such men, as Cæsar adds, are commonly *dangerous*, but also, having little enjoyment within themselves, they can never become agreeable to others, or contribute to social entertainment. In all polite nations and ages, a relish for pleasure, if accompanied with temperance and decency, is esteemed a considerable merit, even in the greatest men; and becomes still more requisite in those of inferior rank and character. It is an agreeable representation, which a French writer

* See NOTE [KK].

writer gives of the ſituation of his own mind in this particular, *Virtue, I love,* ſays he, *without auſterity: Pleaſure, without effeminacy: And life, without fearing its end* *.

Who is not ſtruck with any ſignal inſtance of Greatneſs of Mind or Dignity of Character; with elevation of ſentiment, diſdain of ſlavery, and with that noble pride and ſpirit, which ariſes from conſcious virtue? The ſublime, ſays Longinus, is often nothing but the echo or image of magnanimity; and where this quality appears in any one, even though a ſyllable be not uttered, it excites our applauſe and admiration; as may be obſerved of the famous ſilence of Ajax in the Odyſſey, which expreſſes more noble diſdain and reſolute indignation, than any language can convey †.

Were I Alexander, ſaid Parmenio, *I would accept of theſe offers made by* Darius. *So would I too,* replied Alexander, *were I* Parmenio. This ſaying is admirable, ſays Longinus, from a like principle ‡.

Go! cries the ſame hero to his ſoldiers, when they refuſed to follow him to the Indies, *go tell your countrymen, that you left* Alexander *compleating the conqueſt of the world.* " Alexander," ſaid the Prince of Condé, who always admired this paſſage, " abandoned by his ſoldiers, among Barbarians, not yet fully ſubdued, felt in himſelf ſuch " a dignity and right of empire, that he could not " believe it poſſible, that any one would refuſe to " obey him. Whether in Europe or in Aſia, among Greeks or Perſians, all was indifferent to " him: Wherever he found men, he fancied he " ſhould find ſubjects."

The

* " J'aime la vertu, ſans rudeſſe;
" J'aime le plaiſir, ſans moleſſe;
" J'aime la vie, & n'en crains point la fin."
St. EVREMOND.

† Cap. 9.

‡ Idem.

The confident of Medea in the tragedy recommends caution and ſubmiſſion; and enumerating all the diſtreſſes of that unfortunate heroine, aſks her, what ſhe has to ſupport her againſt her numerous and implacable enemies, *Myſelf*, replies ſhe; *Myſelf, I ſay, and it is enough.* Boileau juſtly recommends this paſſage as an inſtance of true ſublime *.

When Phocion, the modeſt, the gentle Phocion, was led to execution, he turned to one of his fellow-ſufferers, who was lamenting his own had fate. *Is it not glory enough for you*, ſays he, *that you die with* Phocion †?

Place in oppoſition the picture, which Tacitus draws of Vitellius, fallen from empire, prolonging his ignominy from a wretched love of life, delivered over to the mercileſs rabble; toſſed, buffeted, and kicked about; conſtrained, by their holding a poniard under his chin, to raiſe his head, and expoſe himſelf to every contumely. What abject infamy! What low humiliation! Yet even here, ſays the hiſtorian, he diſcovered ſome ſymptoms of a mind not wholly degenerate. To a tribune, who inſulted him, he replied, *I am ſtill your emperor* ‡.

We never excuſe the abſolute want of ſpirit and dignity of character, or a proper ſenſe of what is due to one's ſelf, in ſociety and the common intercourſe of life. This vice conſtitutes what we properly call *meanneſs*; when a man can ſubmit to the baſeſt ſlavery, in order to gain his ends; fawn upon thoſe who abuſe him; and degrade himſelf by intimacies and familiarities with undeſerving inferiors. A certain degree of generous pride or ſelf-value is ſo requiſite, that the abſence of it in the mind diſpleaſes, after the ſame manner as the want

* Reflection 10 ſur Longin. † PLUTARCH in PHOC.
‡ See NOTE [LL]

want of a noſe, eye, or any of the moſt material feature of the face or member of the body*.

The utility of Courage, both to the public and to the perſon poſſeſſed of it, is an obvious foundation of merit: But to any one who duly conſiders of the matter, it will appear, that this quality has a peculiar luſte, which it derives wholly from itſelf, and from that noble elevation inſeparable from it. Its figure, drawn by painters and by poets, diſplays, in each feature, a ſublimity and daring confidence; which catches the eye, engages the affections, and diffuſes, by ſympathy, a like ſublimity of ſentiment over every ſpectator.

Under what ſhining colours does Demoſthenes † repreſent Philip; where the orator apologizes for his own adminiſtration, and juſtifies that pertinacious love of liberty, with which he had inſpired the Athenians. "I beheld Philip," ſays he, "he "with whom was your conteſt, reſolutely, while "in purſuit of empire and dominion, expoſing "himſelf to every wound; his eye goared, his "neck wreſted, his arm, his thigh pierced, what-"ever part of his body fortune ſhould ſeize on, that "cheerfully relinquiſhing; provided that, with "what remained, he might live in honour and "renown. And ſhall it be ſaid, that he, born "in Pella, a place heretofore mean and ignoble, "ſhould be inſpired with ſo high an ambition "and thirſt of fame: While you, Athenians, "*&c.*" Theſe praiſes excite the moſt lively admiration; but the views preſented by the orator, carry us not, we ſee, beyond the hero himſelf, nor ever regard the future advantageous conſequences of his valour.

The martial temper of the Romans, inflamed by continual wars, had raiſed their eſteem of courage

* See NOTE [MM].

† Pro corona.

courage so high, that, in their language, it was called *virtue*, by way of excellence and of distinction from all other moral qualities. *The* Suevi, in the opinion of Tacitus †, *dressed their hair with a laudable intent: Not for the purpose of loving or being loved: They adorned themselves only for their enemies, and in order to appear more terrible.* A sentiment of the historian, which would sound a little oddly in other nations and other ages.

The Scythians, according to Herodotus ‡, after scalping their enemies, dressed their skin like leather, and used it as a towel; and whoever had the most of those towels was most esteemed among them. So much had martial bravery, in that nation, as well as in many others, destroyed the sentiments of humanity; a virtue surely much more useful and engaging.

It is indeed observable, that, among all uncultivated nations, who have not, as yet, had full experience of the advantages attending beneficence, justice, and the social virtues, courage is the predominant excellence; what is most celebrated by poets, recommended by parents and instructors, and admired by the public in general. The ethics of Homer are, in this particular, very different from those of Fenelon, his elegant imitator; and such as were well suited to an age, when one hero, as remarked by Thucydides ‖, could ask another, without offence, whether he were a robber or not. Such also, very lately, was the system of ethics, which prevailed in many barbarous parts of Ireland; if we may credit Spencer, in his judicious account of the state of that kingdom §.

Of

† De moribus Germ. ‡ Lib. iv. ‖ Lib. i.

§ It is a common use, says he, amongst their gentlemen's sons, that,

Of the ſame claſs of virtues with courage is that undiſturbed philoſophical Tranquillity, ſuperior to pain, ſorrow, anxiety, and each aſſault of adverſe fortune. Conſcious of his own virtue, ſay the philoſophers, the ſage elevates himſelf above every accident of life; and ſecurely placed in the temple of wiſdom, looks down on inferior mortals, engaged in purſuit of honours, riches, reputation, and every frivolous enjoyment. Theſe pretenſions, no doubt, when ſtretched to the utmoſt, are, by far, too magnificent for human nature. They carry, however, a grandeur with them, which ſeizes the ſpectator, and ſtrikes him with admiration. And the nearer we can approach in practice, to this ſublime tranquillity and indifference (for we muſt diſtinguiſh it from a ſtupid inſenſibility) the more ſecure enjoyment ſhall we attain within ourſelves, and the more greatneſs of mind ſhall we diſcover to the world. The philoſophical tranquillity may, indeed, be conſidered only as a branch of magnanimity.

Who admires not Socrates; his perpetual ſerenity and contentment, amidſt the greateſt poverty and domeſtic vexations; his reſolute contempt of riches, and his magnanimous care of preſerving liberty, while he refuſed all aſſiſtance from his friends and diſciples, and avoided even the dependence of an obligation? Epictetus had not ſo much as a door to his little houſe or hovel; and therefore, ſoon loſt his iron lamp, the only furniture which he had worth taking. But

 reſolving

that, as ſoon as they are able to uſe their weapons, they ſtrait gather to themſelves three or four ſtraggles or kern, with whom wandering a while up and down idly the country, taking only meat, he at laſt falleth into ſome bad occaſion, that ſhall be offered; which being once made known, he is thenceforth counted a man of worth, in whom there is courage.

resolving to disappoint all robbers for the future, he supplied its place with an earthen lamp, of which he very peaceably kept possession ever after.

Among the ancients, the heroes in philosophy, as well as those in war and patriotism, have a grandeur and force of sentiment, which astonishes our narrow souls, and is rashly rejected as extravagant and supernatural. They, in their turn, I allow, would have had equal reason to consider as romantic and incredible, the degree of humanity, clemency, order, tranquillity, and other social virtues, to which, in the administration of government, we have attained in modern times, had any been then able to have made a fair representation of them. Such is the compensation, which nature, or rather education, has made in the distribution of excellencies and virtues, in those different ages.

The merit of Benevolence, arising from its utility, and its tendency to promote the good of mankind, has been already explained, and is, no doubt, the source of a *considerable* part of that esteem, which is so universally paid to it. But it will also be allowed, that the very softness and tenderness of the sentiment, its engaging endearments, its fond expressions, its delicate attentions, and all that flow of mutual confidence and regard, which enters into a warm attachment of love and friendship: It will be allowed, I say, that these feelings, being delightful in themselves, are necessarily communicated to the spectators, and melt them into the same fondness and delicacy. The tear naturally starts in our eye on the apprehension of a warm sentiment of this nature: Our breast heaves, our heart is agitated, and every humane tender principle of our frame is set in motion, and gives us the purest and most satisfactory enjoyment.

When

When poets form deſcriptions of Elyſian fields, where the bleſſed inhabitants ſtand in no need of each other's aſſiſtance, they yet repreſent them as maintaining a conſtant intercourſe of love and friendſhip, and ſooth our fancy with the pleaſing image of theſe ſoft and gentle paſſions. The idea of tender tranquillity in a paſtoral Arcadia is agreeable from a like principle, as has been obſerved above *.

Who would live amidſt perpetual wrangling, and ſcolding, and mutual reproaches? The roughneſs and harſhneſs of theſe emotions diſturb and diſpleaſe us: We ſuffer by contagion and ſympathy; nor can we remain indifferent ſpectators, even though certain, that no pernicious conſequences would ever follow from ſuch angry paſſions.

As a certain proof, that the whole merit of benevolence is not derived from its uſefulneſs, we may obſerve, that, in a kind way of blame, we ſay, a perſon is *too good*; when he exceeds his part in ſociety, and carries his attention for others beyond the propor bounds. In like manner, we ſay a man is *too high-ſpirited*, *too intrepid*, *too indifferent about fortune*: Reproaches, which really, at bottom, imply more eſteem than many panegyrics. Being accuſtomed to rate the merit and demerit of characters chiefly by their uſeful or pernicious tendencies, we cannot forbear applying the epithet of blame, when we diſcover a ſentiment, which riſes to a degree, that is hurtful: But it may happen, at the ſame time, that its noble elevation, or its engaging tenderneſs ſo ſeizes the heart, as rather to encreaſe our friendſhip and concern for the perſon †.

 The

* Sect. v. Part 2.

† Cheerfulneſs could ſcarce admit of blame from its exceſs, were

The amours and attachments of Harry the IVth of France, during the civil wars of the league, frequently hurt his intereſt and his cauſe; but all the young, at leaſt, and amorous, who can ſympathize with the tender paſſions, will allow, that this very weakneſs (for they will readily call it ſuch) chiefly endears that hero, and intereſts them in his fortunes.

The exceſſive bravery and reſolute inflexibility of Charles the XIIth ruined his own country, and infeſted all his neighbours; but have ſuch ſplendour and greatneſs in their appearance, as ſtrike us with admiration; and they might, in ſome degree, be even approved of, if they betrayed not ſometimes too evident ſymptoms of madneſs and diſorder.

The Athenians pretended to the firſt invention of agriculture and of laws; and always valued themſelves extremely on the benefit thereby procured to the whole race of mankind. They alſo boaſted, and with reaſon, of their warlike enterprizes; particularly againſt thoſe innumerable fleets and armies of Perſians, which invaded Greece during the reigns of Darius and Xerxes. But though there be no compariſon, in point of utility, between theſe peaceful and military honours; yet we find, that the orators, who have writ ſuch elaborate panegyrics on that famous city, have chiefly triumphed in diſplaying the warlike atchievements. Lyſias, Thucydides, Plato, and Iſocrates diſcover, all of them, the ſame partiality; which, though condemned by calm reaſon and reflection, appears ſo natural in the mind of man.

It

were it not that diſſolute mirth, without a proper cauſe or ſubject, is a ſure ſymptom and characteriſtic of folly, and on that account diſguſtful.

It is obſervable, that the great charm of poetry conſiſts in lively pictures of the ſublime paſſions, magnanimity, courage, diſdain of fortune; or thoſe of the tender affections, love and friendſhip; which warm the heart, and diffuſe over it ſimilar ſentiments and emotions. And though all kinds of paſſion, even the moſt diſagreeable, ſuch as grief and anger, are obſerved, when excited by poetry, to convey a ſatisfaction, from a mechaniſm of nature, not eaſy to be explained: Yet thoſe more elevated or ſofter affections have a peculiar influence, and pleaſe from more than one cauſe or principle. Not to mention, that they alone intereſt us in the fortune of the perſons repreſented, or communicate any eſteem and affection for their character.

And can it poſſibly be doubted, that this talent itſelf of poets, to move the paſſions, this Pathetic and Sublime of ſentiment, is a very conſiderable merit; and being enhanced by its extreme rarity, may exalt the perſon poſſeſſed of it, above every character of the age in which he lives? The prudence, addreſs, ſteadineſs, and benign government of Auguſtus, adorned with all the ſplendour of his noble birth and imperial crown, render him but an unequal competitor for fame with Virgil, who lays nothing into the oppoſite ſcale but the divine beauties of his poetical genius.

The very ſenſibility to theſe beauties, or a Delicacy of taſte, is itſelf a beauty in any character; as conveying the pureſt, the moſt durable, and moſt innocent of all enjoyments.

Theſe are ſome inſtances of the ſeveral ſpecies of merit, that are valued for the immediate pleaſure, which they communicate to the perſon poſſeſſed of them. No views of utility or of future beneficial conſequences enter into this ſentiment,

ment of approbation; yet is it of a kind ſimilar to that other ſentiment, which ariſes from views of a public or private utility. The ſame ſocial ſympathy, we may obſerve, or fellow-feeling with human happineſs or miſery, gives riſe to both; and this analogy, in all the parts of the preſent theory, may juſtly be regarded as a confirmation of it.

SECT-

SECTION VIII.

Of QUALITIES IMMEDIATELY AGREEABLE to OTHERS *.

AS the mutual ſhocks, in *ſociety*, and the oppoſitions of intereſt and ſelf-love have conſtrained mankind to eſtabliſh the laws of *juſtice*; in order to preſerve the advantages of mutual aſſiſtance and protection: In like manner, the eternal contrarieties, in *company*, of men's pride and ſelf-conceit, have introduced the rules of Good-Manners or Politeneſs; in order to facilitate the intercourſe of minds and an undiſturbed commerce and converſation. Among well-bred people, a mutual deference is affected: Contempt of others diſguiſed: Authority concealed: Attention given to each in his turn: And an eaſy ſtream of converſation maintained, without vehemence, without interruption, without eagerneſs for victory, and without any airs of ſuperiority. Theſe attentions and regards are immediately *agreeable* to others, abſtracted

* It is the nature, and, indeed, the definition of virtue, that it is *a quality of the mind agreeable to or approved of by every one, who conſiders or contemplates it*. But ſome qualities produce pleaſure, becauſe they are uſeful to ſociety, or uſeful or agreeable to the perſon himſelf; others produce it more immediately: Which is the caſe with the claſs of virtues here conſidered.

ed from any consideration of utility or beneficial tendencies: They conciliate affection, promote esteem, and extremely enhance the merit of the person, who regulates his behaviour by them.

Many of the forms of breeding are arbitrary and casual: But the thing expressed by them is still the same. A Spaniard goes out of his own house before his guest, to signify that he leaves him master of all. In other countries, the landlord walks out last, as a common mark of deference and regard.

But, in order to render a man perfect *good company*, he must have Wit and Ingenuity as well as good-manners. What wit is, it may not be easy to define; but it is easy surely to determine, that it is a quality immediately *agreeable* to others, and communicating, on its first appearance, a lively joy and satisfaction to every one who has any comprehension of it. The most profound metaphysics, indeed, might be employed, in explaining the various kinds and species of wit; and many classes of it, which are now received on the sole testimony of taste and sentiment, might, perhaps, be resolved into more general principles. But this is sufficient for our present purpose, that it does affect taste and sentiment, and bestowing an immediate enjoyment, is a sure source of approbation and affection.

In countries, where men pass most of their time in conversation, and visits, and assemblies, these *companionable* qualities, so to speak, are of high estimation, and form a chief part of personal merit. In countries, where men live a more domestic life, and either are employed in business, or amuse themselves in a narrower circle of acquaintance, the more solid qualities are chiefly regarded. Thus, I have often observed, that, among the French, the first questions, with regard to a stranger, are, *Is he polite? Has he wit?*

In

In our own country, the chief praife beftowed, is always that of a *good-natured, fenfible fellow.*

In converfation, the lively fpirit of dialogue is *agreeable*, even to thofe who defire not to have any fhare in the difcourfe: Hence the teller of long ftories, or the pompous declaimer, is very little approved of. But moft men defire likewife their turn in the converfation, and regard, with a very evil eye, that *loquacity*, which deprives them of a right they are naturally fo jealous of.

There is a fort of harmlefs *liars*, frequently to be met with in company, who deal much in the marvellous. Their ufual intention is to pleafe and entertain; but as men are moft delighted with what they conceive to be truth, thefe people miftake extremely the means of pleafing, and incur univerfal blame. Some indulgence, however, to lying or fiction is given in *humorous* ftories, becaufe it is there really agreeable and entertaining; and truth is not of any importance.

Eloquence, genius of all kinds, even good fenfe, and found reafoning, when it rifes to an eminent degree, and is employed upon fubjects of any confiderable dignity and nice difcernment; all thefe endowments feem immediately agreeable, and have a merit diftinct from their ufefulnefs. Rarity, likewife, which fo much enhances the price of every thing, muft fet an additional value on thefe noble talents of the human mind.

Modefty may be underftood in different fenfes, even abftracted from chaftity, which has been already treated of. It fometimes means that tendernefs and nicety of honour, that apprehenfions of blame, that dread of intrufion or injury towards others, that Pudor, which is the proper guardian of every kind of virtue, and a fure prefervative againft vice and corruption. But its moft ufual meaning is when it is oppofed to *impudence* and *arrogance*, and expreffes a diffidence of our own judgment,

judgment, and a due attention and regard for others. In young men chiefly, this quality is a ſure ſign of good ſenſe; and is alſo the certain means of augmenting that endowment, by preſerving their ears open to inſtruction, and making them ſtill graſp after new attainments. But it has a farther charm to every ſpectator; by flattering every man's vanity, and preſenting the appearance of a docile pupil, who receives, with proper attention and reſpect, every word they utter.

Men have, in general, a much greater propenſity to over-value than undervalue themſelves; notwithſtanding the opinion of Ariſtotle *. This makes us more jealous of the exceſs on the former ſide, and cauſes us to regard, with a peculiar indulgence, all tendency to modeſty and ſelf-diffidence; as eſteeming the danger leſs of falling into any vicious extreme of that nature. It is thus, in countries, where men's bodies are apt to exceed in corpulency, perſonal beauty is placed in a much greater degree of ſlenderneſs, than in countries, where that is the moſt uſual defect. Being ſo often ſtruck with inſtances of one ſpecies of deformity, men think they can never keep at too great a diſtance from it, and wiſh always to have a leaning to the oppoſite ſide. In like manner, were the door opened to ſelf praiſe, and were Montaigne's maxim obſerved, that one ſhould ſay as frankly, *I have ſenſe, I have learning, I have courage, beauty, or wit*; as it is ſure we often think ſo; were this the caſe, I ſay, every one is ſenſible, that ſuch a flood of impertinence would break in upon us, as would render ſociety wholly intolerable. For his reaſon cuſtom has eſtabliſhed it as a rule, in common ſocieties, that men ſhould not indulge themſelves in ſelf-praiſe, or even ſpeak much of themſelves; and it is only among intimate friends or people

* Ethic. ad Nicomachum.

people of very manly behaviour, that one is allowed to do himſelf juſtice. No body finds fault with Maurice, Prince of Orange, for his reply to one, who aſked him, whom he eſteemed the firſt general of the age, *The marquis of* Spinola, ſaid he, *is the ſecond.* Though it is obſervable, that the ſelf-praiſe implied is here better implied, than if it had been directly expreſſed, without any cover or diſguiſe.

He muſt be a very ſuperficial thinker, who imagines, that all inſtances of mutual deference are to be underſtood in earneſt, and that a man would be more eſteemable for being ignorant of his own merits and accompliſhments. A ſmall bias towards modeſty, even in the internal ſentiment, is favourably regarded, eſpecially in young people; and a ſtrong bias is required, in the outward behaviour: But this excludes not a noble pride and ſpirit, which may openly diſplay itſelf in its full extent, when one lies under calumny or oppreſſion of any kind. The generous contumacy of Socrates, as Cicero calls it, has been highly celebrated in all ages; and when joined to the uſual modeſty of his behaviour, forms a ſhining character. Iphicrates, the Athenian, being accuſed of betraying the intereſts of his country, aſked his accuſer, *Would you,* ſays he, *have, on a like occaſion, been guilty of that crime? By no means,* replied the other. *And can you then imagine,* cried the hero, *that* Iphicrates *would be guilty* *? In ſhort, a generous ſpirit and ſelf-value, well founded, decently diſguiſed, and courageouſly ſupported under diſtreſs and calumny, is a great excellency, and ſeems to derive its merit from the noble elevation of its ſentiment, or its immediate agreeableneſs to its poſſeſſor. In ordinary characters, we approve of a bias towards modeſty, which is a quality immediately agreeable to others:

* Quinctil. lib. v. cap. 12.

others: The vicious excefs of the former virtue, namely, infolence or haughtinefs, is immediately difagreeable to others: The excefs of the latter is fo to the poffeffor. Thus are the boundaries of thefe duties adjufted.

A defire of fame, reputation, or a character with others, is fo far from being blameable, that it feems infeparable from virtue, genius, capacity, and a generous or noble difpofition. An attention even to trivial matters, in order to pleafe, is alfo expected and demanded by fociety; and no one is furprifed, if he find a man in company, to obferve a greater elegance of drefs and more pleafant flow of converfation, than when he paffes his time at home, and with his own family. Wherein, then, confifts Vanity, which is fo juftly regarded as a fault or imperfection. It feems to confift chiefly in fuch an intemperate difplay of our advantages, honours, and accomplifhments; in fuch an importunate and open demand of praife and admiration, as is offenfive to others, and encroaches too far on *their* fecret vanity and ambition. It is befides a fure fymptom of the want of true dignity and elevation of mind, which is fo great an ornament in any character. For why that impatient defire of applaufe; as if you were not juftly entitled to it, and might not reafonably expect, that it would for ever attend you? Why fo anxious to inform us of the great company which you have kept; the obliging things which were faid to you; the honours, the diftinctions which you met with; as if thefe were not things of courfe, and what we could readily, of ourfelves, have imagined, without being told of them?

Decency, or a proper regard to age, fex, character, and ftation in the world, may be ranked among the qualities, which are immediately agreeable to others, and which, by that means, acquire praife and approbation. An effeminate behaviour in a man, a rough manner in a woman; thefe

these are ugly becauſe unſuitable to each character, and different from the qualities which we expect in the ſexes. It is as if a tragedy abounded in comic beauties, or a comedy in tragic. The diſproportions hurt the eye, and convey a diſagreeable ſentiment to the ſpectators, the ſource of blame and diſapprobation. This is that *indecorum*, which is explained ſo much at large by Cicero in his Offices.

Among the other virtues, we may alſo give Cleanlineſs a place; ſince it naturally renders us agreeable to others, and is no inconſiderable ſource of love and affection. No one will deny, that a negligence in this particular is a fault; and as faults are nothing but ſmaller vices, and this fault can have no other origin than the uneaſy ſenſation, which it excites in others; we may, in this inſtance, ſeemingly ſo trivial, clearly diſcover the origin of moral diſtinctions, about which the learned have involved themſelves in ſuch mazes of perplexity and error.

But beſides all the *agreeable* qualities, the origin of whoſe beauty, we can, in ſome degree, explain and account for, there ſtill remains ſomething myſterious and inexplicable, which conveys an immediate ſatisfaction to the ſpectator, but how, or why, or for what reaſon, he cannot pretend to determine. There is a manner, a grace, an eaſe, a genteelneſs, an I-know-not-what, which ſome men poſſeſs above others, which is very different from external beauty and comelineſs, and which, however, catches our affection almoſt as ſuddenly and powerfully. And though this *manner* be chiefly talked of in the paſſion between the ſexes, where the concealed magic is eaſily explained, yet ſurely much of it prevails in all our eſtimation of characters, and forms no inconſiderable part of perſonal merit. This claſs of accompliſhments, therefore, muſt be truſted entirely to the blind, but ſure teſtimony of taſte and ſentiment; and muſt be conſidered

dered as a part of ethics, left by nature to baffle all the pride of philosophy, and make her sensible of her narrow boundaries and slender acquisitions.

We approve of another, because of his wit, politeness, modesty, decency, or any agreeable quality which he possesses; although he be not of our acquaintance, nor has ever given us any entertainment, by means of these accomplishments. The idea, which we form of their effect on his acquaintance, has an agreeable influence on our imagination, and gives us the sentiment of approbation. This principle enters into all the judgments, which we form concerning manners and characters.

SECTION IX.

CONCLUSION.

PART I.

IT may juſtly appear ſurpriſing, that any man, in ſo late an age, ſhould find it requiſite to prove, by elaborate reaſoning, that Perſonal Merit conſiſts altogether in the poſſeſſion of mental qualities, *uſeful* or *agreeable* to the *perſon himſelf* or to *others*. It might be expected, that this principle would have occurred even to the firſt rude, unpractiſed enquirers concerning morals, and been received from its own evidence, without any argument or diſputation. Whatever is valuable in any kind, ſo naturally claſſes itſelf under the diviſion of *uſeful* or *agreeable*, the *utile* or the *dulce*, that it is not eaſy to imagine, why we ſhould ever ſeek farther, or conſider the queſtion as a matter of nice reſearch or enquiry. And as every thing uſeful or agreeable muſt poſſeſs theſe qualities with regard either to the *perſon himſelf* or to *others*, the compleat delineation or deſcription of merit ſeems to be performed as naturally as a ſhadow is caſt by the ſun, or an image is reflected upon water. If the ground, on which the ſhadow is caſt, be not broken and uneven; nor the ſurface, from which the image is reflected, diſturbed and confuſed; a juſt figure is immediately preſented, without any art

art or attention. And it ſeems a reaſonable preſumption, that ſyſtems and hypotheſes have perverted our natural underſtanding; when a theory, ſo ſimple and obvious, could ſo long have eſcaped the moſt elaborate examination.

But however the caſe may have fared with philoſophy; in common life, theſe principles are ſtill implicitly maintained, nor is any other topic of praiſe or blame ever recurred to, when we employ any panegyric or ſatire, any applauſe or cenſure of human action and behaviour. If we obſerve men, in every intercourſe of buſineſs or pleaſure, in every diſcourſe and converſation; we ſhall find them no where, except in the ſchools, at any loſs upon this ſubject. What ſo natural, for inſtance, as the following dialogue? You are very happy, we ſhall ſuppoſe one to ſay, addreſſing himſelf to another, that you have given your daughter to Cleanthes. He is a man of honour and humanity. Every one, who has any intercourſe with him, is ſure of *fair* and *kind* treatment *. I congratulate you too, ſays another on the promiſing expectations of this ſon in-law; whoſe aſſiduous application to the ſtudy of the laws, whoſe quick penetration and early knowledge both of men and buſineſs, prognoſticate the greateſt honours and advancement †. You ſurprize me, replies a third, when you talk of Cleanthes as a man of buſineſs and application. I met him lately in a circle of the gayeſt company, and he was the very life and ſoul of our converſation: So much wit with good manners; ſo much gallantry without affectation; ſo much ingenious knowledge ſo genteelly delivered, I have never before obſerved in any one ‡. You would admire him ſtill more, ſays a fourth, if you knew him

* Qualities uſeful to others.

† Qualities uſeful to the perſon himſelf.

‡ Qualities immediately agreeable to others.

him more familiarly. That chearfulneſs, which you might remark in him, is not a ſudden flaſh ſtruck out by company: It runs through the whole tenor of his life, and preſerves a perpetual ſerenity on his countenance, and tranquillity in his ſoul. He has met with ſevere trials, misfortunes as well as dangers; and by his greatneſs of mind, was ſtill ſuperior to all of them *. The image, gentlemen, which you have here delineated of Cleanthes, cry'd I, is that of accompliſhed merit. Each of you has given a ſtroke of the pencil to his figure: and you have unawares exceeded all the pictures drawn by Gratian or Caſtiglione. A philoſopher might ſelect this character as a model of perfect virtue.

And as every quality, which is uſeful or agreeable to ourſelves or others, is, in common life, allowed to be a part of perſonal merit; ſo no other will ever be received, where men judge of things by their natural, unprejudiced reaſon, without the deluſive gloſſes of ſuperſtition and falſe religion. Celibacy, faſting, penance, mortification, ſelf-denial, humility, ſilence, ſolitude, and the whole train of monkiſh virtues; for what reaſon are they every where rejected by men of ſenſe, but becauſe they ſerve to no manner of purpoſe; neither advance a man's fortune in the world, nor render him a more valuable member of ſociety; neither qualify him for the entertainment of company, nor increaſe his power of ſelf-enjoyment? We obſerve, on the contrary, that they croſs all theſe deſirable ends; ſtupify the underſtanding and harden the heart, obſcure the fancy and ſour the temper. We juſtly, therefore, transfer them to the oppoſite column, and place them in the catalogue of vices; nor has any ſuperſtition force ſufficient among men of the world,

* Qualities immediately agreeable to the perſon himſelf.

world, to pervert entirely their natural ſentiments. A gloomy hair-brained enthuſiaſt, after his death, may have a place in the calendar; but will ſcarcely ever be admitted, when alive, into intimacy and ſociety, except by thoſe who are as delirious and diſmal as himſelf.

It ſeems a happineſs in the preſent theory, that it enters not into that vulgar diſpute concerning the *degrees* of benevolence or ſelf-love, which prevail in human nature: a diſpute which is never likely to have any iſſue, both becauſe men, who have taken part, are not eaſily convinced, and becauſe the phænomena, which can be produced on either ſide, are ſo diſperſed, ſo uncertain, and ſubject to ſo many interpretations, that it is ſcarcely poſſible accurately to compare them, or draw from them any determinate inference or concluſion. It is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe, if it be allowed, what ſurely, without the greateſt abſurdity, cannot be diſputed, that there is ſome benevolence, however ſmall, infuſed into our boſom; ſome ſpark of friendſhip for human kind; ſome particle of the dove, kneaded into our frame, along with the elements of the wolf and ſerpent. Let theſe generous ſentiments be ſuppoſed ever ſo weak; let them be inſufficient to move even a hand or finger of our body; they muſt ſtill direct the determinations of our mind, and where every thing elſe is equal, produce a cool preference of what is uſeful and ſerviceable to mankind, above what is pernicious and dangerous. A *moral diſtinction*, therefore, immediately ariſes; a general ſentiment of blame and approbation; a tendency, however faint, to the objects of the one, and a proportionable averſion to thoſe of the other. Nor will thoſe reaſoners, who ſo earneſtly maintain the predominant ſelfiſhneſs of human kind, be any wiſe ſcandalized at hearing of the weak ſentiments of virtue, implanted in our nature. On the contrary, they are found as ready to maintain the

the one tenet as the other; and their ſpirit of ſatire (for ſuch it appears, rather than of corruption) naturally gives riſe to both opinions; which have, indeed, a great and almoſt an indiſſoluble connexion together.

Avarice, ambition, vanity, and all paſſions vulgarly, though improperly, comprized under the denomination of *ſelf-love*, are here excluded from our theory concerning the origin of morals, not becauſe they are too weak, but becauſe they have not a proper direction, for that purpoſe. The notion of morals, implies ſome ſentiment common to all mankind, which recommends the ſame object to general approbation, and makes every man, or moſt men, agree in the ſame opinion or deciſion concerning it. It alſo implies ſome ſentiment, ſo univerſal and comprehenſive as to extend to all mankind, and render the actions and conduct, even of the perſons the moſt remote, an object of applauſe or cenſure, according as they agree or diſagree with that rule of right which is eſtabliſhed. Theſe two requiſite circumſtances belong alone to the ſentiment of humanity here inſiſted on. The other paſſions produce, in every breaſt, many ſtrong ſentiments of deſire and averſion, affection and hatred; but theſe neither are felt ſo much in common, nor are ſo comprehenſive, as to be the foundation of any general ſyſtem and eſtabliſhed theory of blame or approbation.

When a man denominates another his *enemy*, his *rival*, his *antagoniſt*, his *adverſary*, he is underſtood to ſpeak the language of ſelf-love, and to expreſs ſentiments, peculiar to himſelf, and ariſing from his particular circumſtances and ſituation. But when he beſtows on any man the epithets of *vicious* or *odious* or *depraved*, he then ſpeaks another language, and expreſſes ſentiments, in which, he expects, all his audience are to concur with him. He muſt here, therefore, depart from his private and parti-

cular ſituation, and muſt chuſe a point of view, common to him with others: He muſt move ſome univerſal principle of the human frame, and touch a ſtring, to which all mankind have an accord and ſymphony. If he means, therefore, to expreſs, that this man poſſeſſes qualities, whoſe tendency is pernicious to ſociety, he has choſen this common point of view, and has touched the principle of humanity, in which every man, in ſome degree, concurs. While the human heart is compounded of the ſame elements as at preſent, it will never be wholly indifferent to public good, nor entirely unaffected with the tendency of characters and manners. And though this affection of humanity may not generally be eſteemed ſo ſtrong as vanity or ambition, yet, being common to all men, it can alone be the foundation of morals, or of any general ſyſtem of blame or praiſe. One man's ambition is not another's ambition; nor will the ſame event or object ſatisfy both: But the humanity of one man is the humanity of every one; and the ſame object touches this paſſion in all human creatures.

But the ſentiments, which ariſe from humanity, are not only the ſame in all human creatures, and produce the ſame approbation or cenſure; but they alſo comprehend all human creatures; nor is there any one whoſe conduct or character is not, by their means, an object, to every one, of cenſure or approbation. On the contrary, thoſe other paſſions, commonly denominated ſelfiſh, both produce different ſentiments in each individual, according to his particular ſituation; and alſo contemplate the greater part of mankind with the utmoſt indifference and unconcern. Whoever has a high regard and eſteem for me flatters my vanity; whoever expreſſes contempt mortifies and diſpleaſes me: But as my name is known but to a ſmall part of mankind, there are few, who come within the ſphere of this

paſſion, or excite, on its account, either my affection or diſguſt. But if you repreſent a tyrannical, inſolent, or barbarous behaviour, in any country or in any age of the world; I ſoon carry my eye to the pernicious tendency of ſuch a conduct, and feel the ſentiment of repugnance and diſpleaſure towards it. No character can be ſo remote as to be, in this light, wholly indifferent to me. What is beneficial to ſociety or to the perſon himſelf muſt ſtill be preferred. And every quality or action, of every human being, muſt, by this means, be ranked under ſome claſs or denomination, expreſſive of general cenſure or applauſe.

What more, therefore, can we aſk to diſtinguiſh the ſentiments, dependant on humanity, from thoſe connected with any other paſſion, or to ſatisfy us, why the former are the origin of morals, not the latter? Whatever conduct gains any approbation, by touching my humanity, procures alſo the applauſe of all mankind, by affecting the ſame principle in them: But what ſerves my avarice or ambition pleaſes theſe paſſions in me alone, and affects not the avarice and ambition of the reſt of mankind. There is no circumſtance of conduct in any man, provided it have a beneficial tendency, that is not agreeable to my humanity, however remote the perſon: But every man, ſo far removed as neither to croſs nor ſerve my avarice nor ambition, is regarded as wholly indifferent by thoſe paſſions. The diſtinction, therefore, between theſe ſpecies of ſentiment being ſo great and evident, language muſt ſoon be moulded upon it, and muſt invent a peculiar ſet of terms, in order to expreſs thoſe univerſal ſentiments of cenſure or approbation, which ariſe from humanity, or from views of general uſefulneſs and its contrary. Virtue and Vice become then known: Morals are re-

cognized: Certain general ideas are framed of human conduct and behaviour: Such measures are expected from men, in such situations: This action is determined to be conformable to our abstract rule; that other, contrary. And by such universal principles are the particular sentiments of self-love frequently controuled and limited *.

From instances of popular tumults, seditions, factions, panics, and of all passions, which are shared with a multitude; we may learn the influence of society, in exciting and supporting any emotion; while the most ungovernable disorders are raised, we find, by that means, from the slightest and most frivolous occasions. Solon was no very cruel, though, perhaps, an unjust legislator, who punished neuters in civil wars; and few, I believe, would, in such cases, incur the penalty, were their affection and discourse allowed sufficient to absolve them. No selfishness, and scarce any philosophy, have there force sufficient to support a total coolness and indifference; and he must be more or less than man, who kindles not in the common blaze. What wonder then, that moral sentiments are found of such influence in life; though springing from principles, which may appear, at first sight, somewhat small and delicate? But these principles, we must remark, are social and universal: They form, in a manner, the *party* of human-kind against vice or disorder, its common enemy: And as the benevolent concern for others is diffused, in a greater or less degree, over all men, and is the same in all, it occurs more frequently in discourse, is cherished by society and conversation, and the blame and approbation, consequent on it, are thereby rouzed from that lethargy, into which they are probably lulled, in solitary and uncultivated

* See NOTE [NN].

tivated nature. Other paſſions, though perhaps originally ſtronger, yet being ſelfiſh and private, are often overpowered by its force, and yield the dominion of our breaſt to thoſe ſocial and public principles.

Another ſpring of our conſtitution, that brings a great addition of force to moral ſentiment, is, the love of fame; which rules, with ſuch uncontrolled authority, in all generous minds, and is often the grand object of all their deſigns and undertakings. By our continual and earneſt purſuit of a character, a name, a reputation in the world, we bring our own deportment and conduct frequently in review, and conſider how they appear in the eyes of thoſe who approach and regard us. This conſtant habit of ſurveying ourſelves, as it were, in reflection, keeps alive all the ſentiments of right and wrong, and begets, in noble natures, a certain reverence for themſelves as well as others; which is the ſureſt guardian of every virtue. Their animal conveniencies and pleaſures ſink gradually in their value, while every inward beauty and moral grace is ſtudiouſly acquired, and the mind is accompliſhed in every perfection, which can adorn or embelliſh a rational creature.

Here is the moſt perfect morality with which we are acquainted: Here is diſplayed the force of many ſympathies. Our moral ſentiment is itſelf a feeling chiefly of that nature: And our regard to a character with others ſeems to ariſe only from a care of preſerving a character with ourſelves; and in order to attain this end, we find it neceſſary to prop our tottering judgment on the correſpondent approbation of mankind.

But, that we may accommodate matters, and remove, if poſſible, every difficulty, let us allow all theſe reaſonings to be falſe. Let us allow, that, when we reſolve the pleaſure, which ariſes from

views

views of utility, into the ſentiments of humanity and ſympathy, we have embraced a wrong hypotheſis. Let us confeſs it neceſſary to find ſome other explication of that applauſe, which is paid to objects, whether inanimate, animate, or rational, if they have a tendency to promote the welfare and advantage of mankind. However difficult it be to conceive, that an object is approved of on account of its tendency to a certain end, while the end itſelf is totally indifferent; let us ſwallow this abſurdity, and conſider what are the conſequences.

The preceding delineation or definition of Perſonal Merit muſt ſtill retain its evidence and authority: It muſt ſtill be allowed, that every quality of the mind, which is *uſeful* or *agreeable* to the *perſon himſelf* or to *others*, communicates a pleaſure to the ſpectator, engages his eſteem, and is admitted under the honourable denomination of virtue or merit. Are not juſtice, fidelity, honour, veracity, allegiance, chaſtity, eſteemed ſolely on account of their tendency to promote the good of ſociety? Is not that tendency inſeparable from humanity, benevolence, lenity, generoſity, gratitude, moderation, tenderneſs, friendſhip, and all the other ſocial virtues? Can it poſſibly be doubted, that induſtry, diſcretion, frugality, ſecrecy, order, perſeverance, forethought, judgment, and this whole claſs of virtues and accompliſhments, of which many pages would not contain the catalogue; can it be doubted, I ſay, that the tendency of theſe qualities to promote the intereſt and happineſs of their poſſeſſor, is the ſole foundation of their merit? Who can diſpute that a mind, which ſupports a perpetual ſerenity and chearfulneſs, a noble dignity and ſpirit, a tender affection and goodwill to all around; as it has more enjoyment within itſelf, is alſo a more animating and rejoicing ſpectacle, than if dejected with melancholy, tormented

mented with anxiety, irritated with rage, or ſunk into the moſt abject baſeneſs and degeneracy? And as to the qualities, immediately *agreeable to others*, they ſpeak ſufficiently for themſelves; and he muſt be unhappy, indeed, either in his own temper, or in his ſituation and company, who has never perceived the charms of a facetious wit or flowing affability, of a delicate modeſty or decent genteelneſs of addreſs and manner.

I am ſenſible, that nothing can be more unphiloſophical than to be poſitive or dogmatical on any ſubject; and that, even if *exceſſive* ſcepticiſm could be maintained, it would not be more deſtructive to all juſt reaſoning and enquiry. I am convinced, that, where men are the moſt ſure and arrogant, they are commonly the moſt miſtaken, and have there given reins to paſſion, without that proper deliberation and ſuſpenſe, which can alone ſecure the groſſeſt abſurdities. Yet, I muſt confeſs, that this enumeration puts the matter in ſo ſtrong a light, that I cannot, *at preſent*, be more aſſured of any truth, which I learn from reaſoning and argument, than that perſonal merit conſiſts entirely in the uſefulneſs or agreeableneſs of qualities to the perſon himſelf poſſeſſed of them, or to others, who have any intercourſe with him. But when I reflect, that, though the bulk and figure of the earth have been meaſured, and delineated, though the motions of the tides have been accounted for, the order and œconomy of the heavenly bodies ſubjected to their proper laws, and Infinite itſelf reduced to calculation; yet men ſtill diſpute concerning the foundation of their moral duties: When I reflect on this, I ſay, I fall back into diffidence and ſcepticiſm, and ſuſpect, that an hypotheſis, ſo obvious, had it been a true one, would, long ere now, have been received by the unanimous ſuffrage and conſent of mankind.

PART II.

Having explained the moral *approbation* attending merit or virtue, there remains nothing, but briefly to consider our interested *obligation* to it, and to enquire, whether every man, who has any regard to his own happiness and welfare, will not best find his account in the practice of every moral duty. If this can be clearly ascertained from the foregoing theory, we shall have the satisfaction to reflect, that we have advanced principles, which not only, it is hoped, will stand the test of reasoning and enquiry, but may contribute to the amendment of men's lives, and their improvement in morality and social virtue. And though the philosophical truth of any proposition by no means depends on its tendency to promote the interests of society; yet a man has but a bad grace, who delivers a theory, however true, which, he must confess, leads to a practice dangerous and pernicious. Why rake into those corners of nature, which spread a nuisance all around? Why dig up the pestilence from the pit, in which it is buried? The ingenuity of your researches may be admired; but your systems will be detested: And mankind will agree, if they cannot refute them, to sink them, at least, in eternal silence and oblivion. Truths, which are *pernicious* to society, if any such there be, will yield to errors, which are salutary and *advantageous*.

But what philosophical truths can be more advantageous to society, than those here delivered, which represent virtue in all her genuine and most engaging charms, and make us approach her with ease, familiarity, and affection? The dismal dress falls off, with which many divines, and some philosophers have covered her; and nothing appears but gentleness, humanity, beneficence, affability; nay, even,

even, at proper intervals, play, frolic, and gaity. She talks not of uſeleſs auſterities and rigours, ſuffering and ſelf-denial. She declares, that her ſole purpoſe is, to make her votaries and all mankind, during every inſtant of their exiſtence, if poſſible, cheerful and happy; nor does ſhe ever willingly part with any pleaſure but in hopes of ample compenſation in ſome other period of their lives. The ſole trouble, which ſhe demands, is that of juſt calculation, and a ſteady preference of the greater happineſs. And if any auſtere pretenders approach her, enemies to joy and pleaſure, ſhe eithers rejects them as hypocrites and deceivers; or if ſhe admit them in her train, they are ranked however, among the leaſt favoured of her votaries.

And, indeed, to drop all figurative expreſſion, what hopes can we ever have of engaging mankind to a practice, which we confeſs full of auſterity and rigour? Or what theory of morals can ever ſerve any uſeful purpoſe, unleſs it can ſhow, by a particular detail, that all the duties, which it recommends, are alſo the true intereſt of each individual? The peculiar advantage of the foregoing ſyſtem ſeems to be, that it furniſhes proper mediums for that purpoſer

That the virtues which are immediately *uſefnl* or *agreeable* to the perſon poſſeſſed of them, are deſirable in a view to ſelf-intereſt, it would ſurely be ſuperfluous to prove. Moraliſts, indeed, may ſpare themſelves all the pains, which they often take in recommending theſe duties. To what purpoſe collect arguments, to evince, that temperance is advantageous, and the exceſſes of pleaſure hurtful? When it appears, that theſe exceſſes are denominated ſuch, becauſe they are hurtful; and that, if the unlimited uſe of ſtrong liquors, for inſtance, no more impaired health or the faculties of mind and body than the uſe of air or water, it would not be a whit more vicious or blameable.

It

It ſeems equally ſuperfluous to prove, that the *companionable* virtues of good manners and wit, decency and genteelneſs, are more deſirable than the contrary qualities. Vanity alone, without any other conſideration, is a ſufficient motive to make us wiſh for the poſſeſſion of theſe accompliſhments. No man was ever willingly deficient in this particular. All our failures here proceed from bad education, want of capacity, or a perverſe and unpliable diſpoſition. Would you have your company coveted, admired, followed; rather than hated, deſpiſed, avoided? Can any one ſeriouſly deliberate in the caſe? As no enjoyment is ſincere, without ſome reference to company and ſociety; ſo no ſociety can be agreeable, or even tolerable, where a man feels his preſence unwelcome, and diſcovers all around him ſymptoms of diſguſt and averſion.

But why, in the greater ſociety or confederacy of mankind, ſhould not the caſe be the ſame as in particular clubs and companies? Why is it more doubtful, that the enlarged virtues of humanity, generoſity, beneficence, are deſirable with a view to happineſs and ſelf-intereſt, than the limited endowments of ingenuity and politeneſs? Are we apprehenſive, leſt thoſe ſocial affections interfere, in a greater and more immediate degree than any other purſuits, with private utility, and cannot be gratified, without ſome important ſacrifice of honour and advantage? If ſo, we are but ill inſtructed in the nature of the human paſſions, and are more influenced by verbal diſtinctions than by real differences.

Whatever contradiction may vulgarly be ſuppoſed between the *ſelfiſh* and *ſocial* ſentiments or diſpoſitions, they are really no more oppoſite than ſelfiſh and ambitious, ſelfiſh and vain. It is requiſite, that there be an original propenſity of ſome kind, in order to be a baſis to ſelf-love, by giving a reliſh to the objects of its purſuit; and none more fit for

for this purpose than benevolence or humanity. The goods of fortune are spent in one gratification or another: The miser, who accumulates his annual income, and lends it out at interest, has really spent it in the gratification of his avarice. And it would be difficult to show, why a man is more a loser by a generous action, than by any other method of expence; since the utmost which he can attain, by the most elaborate selfishness, is the indulgence of some affection.

Now if life, without passion, must be altogether insipid and tiresome; let a man suppose that he has full power of modelling his own disposition, and let him deliberate what appetite or desire he would choose for the foundation of his happiness and enjoyment. Every affecton, he would observe, when gratified by success, gives a satisfaction proportioned to its force and violence: but besides this advantage, common to all, the immediate feeling of benevolence and friendship, humanity and kindness, is sweet, smooth, tender, and agreeable, independent of all fortune and accidents. These virtues are besides attended with a pleasing consciousness or remembrance, and keep us in humour with ourselves as well as others; while we retain the agreeable reflection of having done our part towards mankind and society. And though all men show a jealousy of our success in the pursuits of avarice and ambition; yet are we almost sure of their good-will and good-wishes, so long as we persevere in the paths of virtue, and employ ourselves in the execution of generous plans and purposes. What other passion is there where we shall find so many advantages united; an agreeable sentiment, a pleasing consciousness, a good reputation? But of these truths, we may observe, men are, of themselves, pretty much convinced; nor are they deficient in their duty to society, because they would not wish to be generous, friendly, and humane;

humane; but becauſe they do not feel themſelves ſuch.

Treating vice with the greateſt candour, and making it all poſſible conceſſions, we muſt acknowledge, that there is not, in any inſtance, the ſmalleſt pretext for giving it the preference above virtue, with a view to ſelf-intereſt; except, perhaps, in the caſe of juſtice, where a man, taking things in a certain light, may often ſeem to be a loſer by his integrity. And though it is allowed, that, without a regard to property, no ſociety could ſubſiſt; yet according to the imperfect way in which human affairs are conducted, a ſenſible knave, in particular incidents, may think, that an act of iniquity or infidelity will make a conſiderable addition to his fortune, without cauſing any conſiderable breach in the ſocial union and confederacy. That *honeſty is the beſt policy*, may be a good general rule; but is liable to many exceptions: And he, it may, perhaps, be thought, conducts himſelf with moſt wiſdom, who obſerves the general rule, and takes advantage of all the exceptions.

I muſt confeſs, that, if a man think, that this reaſoning much requires an anſwer, it will be little difficult to find any, which will to him appear ſatiſfactory and convincing. If his heart rebel not againſt ſuch pernicious maxims, if he feel no reluctance to the thoughts of villany or baſeneſs, he has indeed loſt a conſiderable motive to virtue; and we may expect that his practice will be anſwerable to his ſpeculation. But in all ingenuous natures, the antipathy to treachery and roguery is too ſtrong to be counterbalanced by any views of profit or pecuniary advantage. Inward peace of mind, conſciouſneſs of integrity, a ſatiſfactory review of our own conduct; theſe are circumſtances very requiſite to happineſs, and will be cheriſhed

and

and cultivated by every honeſt man, who feels the importance of them.

Such a one has, beſides, the frequent ſatisfaction of ſeeing knaves, with all their pretended cunning and abilities, betrayed by their own maxims; and while they purpoſe to cheat with moderation and ſecrecy, a tempting incident occurs, nature is frail, and they give into the ſnare; whence they can never extricate themſelves, without a total loſs of reputation, and the forfeiture of all future truſt and confidence with mankind.

But were they ever ſo ſecret and ſucceſsful, the honeſt man, if he has any tincture of philoſophy, or even common obſervation and reflection, will diſcover that they themſelves are, in the end, the greateſt dupes, and have ſacrificed the invaluable enjoyment of a character, with themſelves at leaſt, for the acquiſition of worthleſs toys and gewgaws. How little is requiſite to ſupply the *neceſſities* of nature? And in a view to *pleaſure*, what compariſon between the unbought ſatisfaction of converſation, ſociety, ſtudy, even health and the common beauties of nature, but above all the peaceful reflection on one's own conduct: What compariſon, I ſay, between theſe, and the feveriſh, empty amuſements of luxury and expence? Theſe natural pleaſures, indeed, are really without price; both becauſe they are below all price in their attainment, and above it in their enjoyment.

APPENDIX I.

Concerning Moral Sentiment.

If the foregoing hypothesis be received, it will now be easy for us to determine the question first started *, concerning the general principles of morals; and though we postponed the decision of that question, lest it should then involve us in intricate speculations, which are unfit for moral discourses, we may resume it at present, and examine how far either *reason* or *sentiment* enters into all decisions of praise or censure.

One principal foundation of moral praise being supposed to lie in the usefulness of any quality or action; it is evident, that *reason* must enter for a considerable share in all decisions of this kind; since nothing but that faculty can instruct us in the tendency of qualities and actions, and point out their beneficial consequences to society and to their possessor. In many cases, this is an affair liable to great controversy: Doubts may arise; opposite interests may occur; and a preference must be given to one side, from very nice views, and a small overbalance of utility. This is particularly remarkable in questions with regard to justice; as is, indeed, natural to suppose, from that species of utility, which attends this virtue †. Were every single instance of justice, like that of benevolence, useful to society; this would be a more simple state

* Sect. I.

† See Appendix III.

ſtate of the caſe, and ſeldom liable to great controverſy. But as ſingle inſtances of juſtice are often pernicious in their firſt and immediate tendency, and as the advantage to ſociety reſults only from the obſervance of the general rule, and from the concurrence and combination of ſeveral perſons in the ſame equitable conduct; the caſe here becomes more intricate and involved. The various circumſtances of ſociety; the various conſequences of any practice; the various intereſts, which may be propoſed: Theſe, on many occaſions, are doubtful, and ſubject to great diſcuſſion and enquiry. The object of municipal laws is to fix all the queſtions with regard to juſtice: The debates of civilians; the reflections of politicians; the precedents of hiſtory and public records, are all directed to the ſame purpoſe. And a very accurate *reaſon* or *judgment* is often requiſite, to give the true determination, amidſt ſuch intricate doubts ariſing from obſcure or oppoſite utilities.

But though reaſon, when fully aſſiſted and improved, be ſufficient to inſtruct us in the pernicious or uſeful tendency of qualities and actions; it is not alone ſufficient to produce any moral blame or approbation. Utility is only a tendency to a certain end; and were the end totally indifferent to us, we ſhould feel the ſame indifference towards the means. It is requiſite a *ſentiment* ſhould here diſplay itſelf, in order to give a preference to the uſeful above the pernicious tendencies. This ſentiment can be no other than a feeling for the happineſs of mankind, and a reſentment of their miſery; ſince theſe are the different ends which virtue and vice have a tendency to promote. Here, therefore, *reaſon* inſtructs us in the ſeveral tendencies of actions, and *humanity* makes a diſtinction in favour of thoſe which are uſeful and beneficial.

This

This partition between the faculties of underſtanding and ſentiment, in all moral deciſions, ſeems clear from the preceding hypotheſis. But I ſhall ſuppoſe that hypotheſis falſe: It will then be requiſite to look out for ſome other theory, that may be ſatisfactory; and I dare venture to affirm, that none ſuch will ever be found, ſo long as we ſuppoſe reaſon to be the ſole ſource of morals. To prove this, it will be proper to weigh the five following conſiderations.

I. It is eaſy for a falſe hypotheſis to maintain ſome appearance of truth, while it keeps wholly in generals, makes uſe of undefined terms, and employs compariſons, inſtead of inſtances. This is particularly remarkable in that philoſophy, which aſcribes the diſcernment of all moral diſtinctions to reaſon alone, without the concurrence of ſentiment. It is impoſſible that, in any particular inſtance, this hypotheſis can ſo much as be rendered intelligible; whatever ſpecious figure it may make in general declamations and diſcourſes. Examine the crime of *ingratitude*, for inſtance; which has place, wherever we obſerve good-will, expreſſed and known, together with good-offices performed, on the one ſide, and a return of ill-will or indifference, with ill-offices or neglect on the other: Anatomize all theſe circumſtances, and examine, by your reaſon alone, in what conſiſts the demerit or blame: You never will come to any iſſue or concluſion.

Reaſon judges either of *matter of fact* or of *relations*. Enquire then, *firſt*, where is that matter of fact, which we here call *crime*; point it out; determine the time of its exiſtence; deſcribe its eſſence or nature; explain the ſenſe or faculty, to which it diſcovers itſelf. It reſides in the mind of the perſon, who is ungrateful. He muſt, therefore, feel it, and be conſcious of it. But nothing is

is there, except the passion of ill-will or absolute indifference. You cannot say, that these, of themselves, always, and in all circumstances are crimes. No: They are only crimes, when directed towards persons, who have before expressed and displayed good-will towards us. Consequently, we may infer, that the crime of ingratitude is not any particular individual *fact*; but arises from a complication of circumstances, which, being presented to the spectator, excites the *sentiment* of blame, by the particular structure and fabric of his mind.

This representation, you say, is false. Crime, indeed, consists not in a particular *fact*, of whose reality we are assured by *reason*: But it consists in certain *moral relations*, discovered by reason, in the same manner as we discover, by reason, the truths of geometry or algebra. But what are the relations, I ask, of which you here talk? In the case stated above, I see first good-will and good-offices in one person; then ill-will and ill-offices in the other. Between these, there is the relation of *contrariety*. Does the crime consist in that relation? But suppose a person bore me ill-will or did me ill-offices; and I, in return were indifferent towards him, or did him good-offices: Here is the same relation of *contrariety*; and yet my conduct is often highly laudable. Twist and turn this matter as much as you will, you can never rest the morality on relation; but must have recourse to the decisions of sentiment.

When it is affirmed, that two and three are equal to the half of ten; this relation of equality, I understand perfectly. I conceive, that if ten be divided into two parts, of which one has as many units as the other; and if any of these parts be compared to two added to three, it will contain as many units as that compound number. But when you draw thence a comparison to moral relations, I own that I am altogether at a loss to understand you.

you. A moral action, a crime, such as ingratitude, is a complicated object. Does the morality consist in the relation of its parts to each other. How? After what manner? Specify the relation: Be more particular and explicit in your propositions; and you will easily see their falsehood.

No, say you, the morality consists in the relation of actions to the rule of right; and they are denominated good or ill, according as they agree or disagree with it. What then is this rule of right? In what does it consist? How is it determined? By reason, you say, which examines the moral relations of actions. So that moral relations are determined by the comparison of actions to a rule. And that rule is determined by considering the moral relations of objects. Is not this fine reasoning?

All this is metaphysics, you cry: That is enough: There needs nothing more to give a strong presumption of falsehood. Yes, reply I: Here are metaphysics surely: But they are all on your side, who advance an abstruse hypothesis, which can never be made intelligible, nor quadrate with any particular instance or illustration. The hypothesis which we embrace is plain. It maintains, that morality is determined by sentiment. It defines virtue to be *whatever mental action or quality gives to a spectator the pleasing sentiment of approbation*; and vice the contrary. We then proceed to examine a plain matter of fact, to wit, what actions have this influence: We consider all the circumstances, in which these actions agree: And thence endeavour to extract some general observations with regard to these sentiments. If you call this metaphysics, and find any thing abstruse here, you need only conclude, that your turn of mind is not suited to the moral sciences.

II. When a man, at any time, deliberates concerning his own conduct (as, whether he had better,

ter, in a particular emergence, aſſiſt a brother or a benefactor), he muſt conſider theſe ſeparate relations, with all the circumſtances and ſituations of the perſons, in order to determine the ſuperior duty and obligation: And in order to determine the proportion of lines in any triangle, it is neceſſary to examine the nature of that figure, and the relations which its ſeveral parts bear to each other. But notwithſtanding this appearing ſimilarity in the two caſes, there is, at bottom, an extreme difference between them. A ſpeculative reaſoner concerning triangles or circles conſiders the ſeveral known and given relations of the parts of theſe figures; and thence infers ſome unknown relation, which is dependent on the former. But in moral deliberations, we muſt be acquainted, before-hand, with all the objects, and all their relations to each other; and from a compariſon of the whole, fix our choice or approbation. No new fact to be aſcertained: No new relation to be diſcovered. All the circumſtances of the caſe are ſuppoſed to be laid before us, ere we can fix any ſentence of blame or approbation. If any material circumſtance be yet unknown or doubtful, we muſt firſt employ our enquiry or intellectual faculties to aſſure us of it; and muſt ſuſpend for a time all moral deciſion or ſentiment. While we are ignorant, whether a man were aggreſſor or not, how can we determine whether the perſon who killed him, be criminal or innocent? But after every circumſtance, every relation is known, the underſtanding has no farther room to operate, nor any object on which it could employ itſelf. The approbation or blame, which then enſues, cannot be the work of the judgment, but of the heart; and is not a ſpeculative propoſition or affirmation, but an active feeling or ſentiment. In the diſquiſitions of the underſtanding, from known circumſtances and relations, we infer ſome new and unknown. In

moral decisions, all the circumstances and relations must be previously known; and the mind, from the contemplation of the whole, feels some new impression of affection or disgust, esteem or contempt, approbation or blame.

Hence the great difference between a mistake of *fact* and one of *right*; and hence the reason why the one is commonly criminal and not the other. When Œdipus killed Laius, he was ignorant of the relation, and from circumstances, innocent and involuntary, formed erroneous opinions concerning the action which he committed. But when Nero killed Agrippina, all the relations between himself and the person, and all the circumstances of the fact, were previously known to him: But the motive of revenge, or fear, or interest, prevailed in his savage heart over the sentiments of duty and humanity. And when we express that detestation against him, to which he, himself, in a little time, became insensible; it is not, that we see any relations, of which he was ignorant; but that, from the rectitude of our disposition, we feel sentiments, against which he was hardened, from flattery and a long perseverance in the most enormous crimes. In these sentiments, then, not in a discovery of relations of any kind, do all moral determinations consist. Before we can pretend to form any decision of this kind, every thing must be known and ascertained on the side of the object or action. Nothing remains but to feel, on our part, some sentiment of blame or approbation; whence we pronounce the action criminal or virtuous.

III. This doctrine will become still more evident, if we compare moral beauty with natural, to which, in many particulars, it bears so near a resemblance. It is on the proportion, relation, and position of parts, that all natural beauty depends; but it would be absurd thence to infer, that the perception of beauty, like that of truth in geome-

trical problems, consists wholly in the perception of relations, and was performed entirely by the understanding or intellectual faculties. In all the sciences, our mind, from the known relations, investigates the unknown: But in all decisions of taste or external beauty, all the relations are before-hand obvious to the eye; and we thence proceed to feel a sentiment of complacency or disgust, according to the nature of the object, and disposition of our organs.

Euclid has fully explained all the qualities of the circle; but has not, in any proposition, said a word of its beauty The reason is evident. The beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line, whose parts are equally distant from a common center. It is only the effect, which that figure produces upon the mind, whose peculiar fabric or structure renders it susceptible of such sentiments. In vain would you look for it in the circle, or seek it, either by your senses or by mathematical reasonings, in all the properties of that figure.

Attend to Palladio and Perrault, while they explain all the parts and properties of a pillar: They talk of the cornice and frieze and base and entablature and shaft and architrave; and give the description and position of each of these members. But should you ask the description and position of its beauty, they would readily reply, that the beauty is not in any of the parts or members of a pillar, but results from the whole, when that complicated figure is presented to an intelligent mind, susceptible to those finer sensations. 'Till such a spectator appear, there is nothing but a figure of such particular dimensions and proportions: From his sentiments alone arise its elegance and beauty.

Again; attend to Cicero, while he paints the crimes of a Verres or a Catiline; you must acknowledge that the moral turpitude results, in the same manner,

manner, from the contemplation of
when preſented to a being, whoſe organs
a particular ſtructure and formation. T
may paint rage, inſolence, barbarity on
ſide: Meekneſs, ſuffering, ſorrow, inno
the other: But if you feel no indignation
paſſion ariſe in you from this complicatio
cumſtances, you would in vain aſk him,
conſiſts the crime or villany, which he ſo
mently exclaims againſt: At what time, or o
ſubject it firſt began to exiſt: And what has
months afterwards become of it, when every
poſition and thought of all the actors is totally
tered, or annihilated. No ſatisfactory anſwer
be given to any of theſe queſtions, upon the a
ſtract hypotheſis of morals; and we muſt at la
acknowledge, that the crime or immorality is no
particular fact or relation, which can be the object
of the underſtanding: But ariſes entirely from the
ſentiment of diſapprobation, which, by the ſtructure of human nature, we unavoidably feel on the apprehenſion of barbarity or treachery.

IV. Inanimate objects may bear to each other all the ſame relations, which we obſerve in moral agents; though the former can never be the object of love or hatred, nor are conſequently ſuſceptible of merit or iniquity. A young tree, which over-tops and deſtroys its parent, ſtands in all the ſame relations with Nero, when he murdered Agrippina; and if morality conſiſted merely in relations, would, no doubt, be equally criminal.

V. It appears evident, that the ultimate ends of human actions can never, in any caſe, be accounted for by *reaſon*, but recommend themſelves entirely to the ſentiments and affections of mankind, without any dependance on the intellectual faculties. Aſk a man, *why he uſes exerciſes*; he will anſwer, *becauſe he deſires to keep his health*. If you then enquire, *why he deſires health*, he will readily reply,

e sickness is painful. If you push your
rther, and desire a reason, *why he hates*
impossible he can ever give any. This
mate end, and is never referred to any
ct.

s, to your second question, *why he desires*
he may also reply, that *it is necessary for the*
of his calling. If you ask, *why he is anxious*
head, he will answer, *because he desires to get*
If you demand *Why? It is the instrument*
asure, says he. And beyond this it is an ab-
ty to ask for a reason. It is impossible there
be a progress *in infinitum*; and that one thing
always be a reason, why another is desired.
mething must be desirable on its own account,
d because of its immediate accord or agreement
with human sentiment and affection.

Now as virtue is an end, and is desirable on its own account, without fee or reward, merely, for the immediate satisfaction which it conveys; it is requisite that there should be some sentiment, which it touches; some internal taste or feeling, or whatever you please to call it, which distinguishes moral good and evil, and which embraces the one and rejects the other.

Thus the distinct boundaries and offices of *reason* and of *taste* are easily ascertained. The former conveys the knowledge of truth and falsehood: The latter gives the sentiment of beauty and deformity, vice and virtue. The one discovers objects, as they really stand in nature, without addition or diminution: The other has a productive faculty, and gilding or staining all natural objects with the colours, borrowed from internal sentiment, raises, in a manner, a new creation. Reason, being cool and disengaged, is no motive to action, and directs only the impulse received from appetite or inclination, by showing us the means of attaining happiness or avoiding misery: Taste, as it gives plea-
sure

ſure or pain, and thereby conſtitutes
miſery, becomes a motive to action, a
ſpring or impulſe to deſire and voliti
circumſtances and relations, known o
the former leads us to the diſcovery of th
ed and unknown: After all circumſtances
tions are laid before us, the latter make
from the whole a new ſentiment of blame
probation. The ſtandard of the one, being
on the nature of things, is eternal and infl
even by the will of the Supreme Being: The
dard of the other, ariſing from the internal
and conſtitution of animals, is ultimately de
from that Supreme Will, which beſtowed on e
being its peculiar nature, and arranged the ſeve
claſſes and orders of exiſtence.

APPENDIX

Of Self-love.

THERE is a principle, ſuppoſed to p among many, which is utterly incompatible wi virtue or moral ſentiment; and as it can pro from nothing but the moſt depraved diſpoſition, in its turn it tends ſtill further to encourage t depravity. This principle is, that all *benevolence* mere hypocriſy, friendſhip a cheat, public ſpir a farce, fidelity a ſnare to procure truſt and confidence; and that, while all of us, at bottom, purſue only our private intereſt, we wear theſe fair diſguiſes, in order to put others off their guard, and expoſe them the more to our wiles and machinations. What heart one muſt be poſſeſſed of who profeſſes ſuch principles, and who feels no internal ſentiment that belies ſo pernicious a theory, it is eaſy to imagine: And alſo, what degree of affection and benevolence he can bear to a ſpecies, whom he repreſents under ſuch odious colours, and ſuppoſes ſo little ſuſceptible of gratitude or any return of affection. Or if we ſhould not aſcribe theſe principles wholly to a corrupted heart, we muſt, at leaſt, account for them from the moſt careleſs and precipitate examination. Superficial reaſoners, indeed, obſerving many falſe pretences among mankind, and feeling, perhaps, no very ſtrong reſtraint in their own diſpoſition, might draw a general and a haſty concluſion, that all

corrupted, and that men, different
r animals, and indeed from all other
istence, admit of no degree of good
are, in every inftance, the fame crea-
different difguifes and appearances.

another principle, fomewhat refembling
; which has been much infifted on by
rs, and has been the foundation of many
; that, whatever affection one may feel,
ne feels for others, no paffion is, or can be
fted; that the moft dangerous friendfhip,
r fincere, is a modification of felf-love; and
even unknown to ourfelves, we feek only our
gratification, while we appear the moft deep-
gaged in fchhmes for the liberty and happi-
of mankind. By a turn of imagination, by
efinement of reflection, by an enthufiafm of
ffion, we feem to take part in the interefts of
thers, and imagine ourfelves divefted of all felfifh
onfiderations: But, at bottom, the moft generous
patriot and moft niggardly mifer, the braveft hero
and moft abject coward, have, in every action, an
equal regard to their own happinefs and welfare.

Whoever concludes from the feeming tendency of this opinion, that thofe, who make profeffion of it, cannot poffibly feel the true fentiments of benevolence, or have any regard for genuine virtue, will often find himfelf, in practice, very much miftaken. Probity and honour were no ftrangers to Epicurus and his fect. Atticus and Horace feem to have enjoyed from nature, and cultivated by reflection, as generous and friendly difpofitions as any difciple of the aufterer fchools. And among the modern, Hobbes and Locke, who maintained the felfifh fyftem of morals, lived irreproachable lives; though the former lay not under any reftraint of religion, which might fupply the defects of his philofophy.

An Epicurean or a Hobbift readily allows, that

there

there is ſuch a thing as friendſhip
without hypocriſy or diſguiſe; thoug
tempt, by a philoſophical chymiſtry, t
elements of this paſſion, if I may ſpeak
of another, and explain every affection
love, twiſted and moulded, by a part
of imagination, into a variety of appeara
as the ſame turn of imagination prevai
every man, nor gives the ſame direction t
ginal paſſion; this is ſufficient, even acco
the ſelfiſh ſyſtem, to make the wideſt diffe
human characters, and denominate one man
ous and humane, another vicious and meanly
reſted. I eſteem the man, whoſe ſelf-lov
whatever means, is ſo directed as to give hi
concern for others, and render him ſerviceab
ſociety: As I hate or deſpiſe him, who has no
gard to any thing beyond his own gratificati
and enjoyments. In vain would you ſuggeſt, t
theſe characters, though ſeemingly oppoſite, ar
at bottom, the ſame, and that a very inconſide
rable turn of thought forms the whole difference
between them. Each character, notwithſtanding
theſe inconſiderable differences, appears to me, in
practice, pretty durable and untranſmutable. And
I find not in this more than in other ſubjects, that
the natural ſentiments, ariſing from the general ap-
pearances of things, are eaſily deſtroyed by ſubtile
reflections concerning the minute origin of theſe
appearances. Does not the lively, chearful colour
of a countenance inſpire me with complacency and
pleaſure; even though I learn from philoſophy,
that all difference of complexion ariſes from the
moſt minute differences of thickneſs, in the moſt
minute parts of the ſkin; by means of which a ſu-
perficies is qualified to reflect one of the original
colours of light, and abſorb the others?

But though the queſtion, concerning the uni-
verſal or partial ſelfiſhneſs of man be not ſo ma-
terial,

usually imagined, to morality and
; certainly of consequence in the spe-
:nce of human nature, and is a pro-
of curiosity and enquiry. It may not,
e unsuitable in this place, to bestow a
ıons upon it*.

ost obvious objection to the selfish hy-
is, that, as it is contrary to common
.nd our most unprejudiced notions, there
red the highest stretch of philosophy to
ı so extraordinary a paradox. To the
careless observer, there appear to be such
ıtions as benevolence and generosity; such
ıons as love, friendship, compassion, grati-
. These sentiments have their causes, effects,
cts, and operations, marked by common lan-
.ge and observation, and plainly distinguished
m those of the selfish passions. And as this
the obvious appearance of things, it must be
ımitted; till some hypothesis be discovered,
vhich, by penetrating deper into human nature,
may prove the former affections to be nothing but modifications of the latter. All attempts of this kind have hitherto proved fruitless, and seem to have proceeded entirely, from the love of *simplicity*, which has been the source of much false reasoning in philosophy. I shall not here enter into any detail on the present subject. Many able philosophers have shown the insufficiency of these systems. And I shall take for granted what, I believe, the smallest reflection will make evident to every impartial enquirer.

But the nature of the subject furnishes the strongest presumption, that no better system will ever, for the future, be invented, in order to account for the origin of the benevolent from the selfish affections, and reduce all the various emotions

* See NOTE [OO].

tions of the human mind to a p ty. The case is not the same in philosophy as in physics. Many in nature, contrary to first appearan found, on more accurate scrutiny, tisfactory. Instances of this kind are that a judicious, as well as witty pl has ventured to affirm, if there be mo way, in which any phænomenon may ed, that there is a general presumptio arising from the causes, which are the vious and familiar. But the presumptio lies on the other side, in all enquiries ing the origin of our passions, and of the operations of the human mind. The and most obvious cause, which can there signed for any phænomenon, is probably th one. When a philosopher, in the explicati his system, is obliged to have recourse to very intricate and refined reflections, and to pose them essential to the producton of any p sion or emotion, we have reason to be extrem ly on our guard against so fallacious an hypo thesis. The affections are not susceptible of an impression from the refinements of reason or imagination; and it is always found, that a vigorous exertion of the latter faculties, necessarily, from the narrow capacity of the human mind, destroys all activity in the former. Our predominant motive or intention is, indeed, frequently concealed from ourselves, when it is mingled and confounded with other motives, which the mind, from vanity or self-conceit, is desirous of supposing more prevalent: But there is no instance, that a concealment of this nature has ever arisen from the abstruseness and intricacy of the motive. A man, that has lost a friend and patron, may flatter himself, that all his grief arises from generous senti-

 ments,

* Mos. Fontenelle.

any mixture of narrow or inte-
tions: But a man, that grieves for
end, who needed his patronage and
ow can we suppose, that his paf-
ness arises from some metaphysical
f-interest, which has no foundation
Ve may as well imagine, that minute
springs, like those of a watch, give
a loaded waggon, as account for the
passion from such abstruse reflections.
s are found susceptible of kindness, both
own species and to ours; nor is there,
ase, the least suspicion of disguise or ar-
hall we account for all *their* sentiments, too,
fined deductions of self-interest? Or if we
a disinterested benevolence in the inferior
, by what rule of analogy can we refuse
the superior?
ve between the sexes begets a complacency
good-will, very distinct from the gratifica-
of appetite. Tenderness to their offspring, in
sensible beings, is commonly able alone to
unter-balance the strongest motives of self-love,
d has no manner of dependance on that af-
ection. What interest can a fond mother have
n view, who loses her health by assiduous atten-
dance on her sick child, and afterwards languishes and dies of grief, when freed, by its death, from the slavery of that attendance?

Is gratitude no affection of the human breast, or is that a word merely, without any meaning or reality? Have we no satisfaction in one man's company above another's and no desire of the welfare of our friend, even though absence or death should prevent us from all participation in it? Or what is it commonly, that gives us any participation in it, even while alive and present, but our affection and regard to him?

These and a thousand other instances are marks of

of a general benevolence in human nature, where no *real* intereſt binds us to the object. And how an *imaginary* intereſt, known and avowed for ſuch, can be the origin of any paſſion or emotion, ſeems difficult to explain. No ſatisfactory hypotheſis of this kind has yet been diſcovered; nor is there the ſmalleſt probability, that the future induſtry of men will ever be attended with more favourable ſucceſs.

But farther, if we conſider rightly of the matter, we ſhall find, that the hypotheſis, which allows of a diſintereſted benevolence, diſtinct from ſelf-love, has really more *ſimplicity* in it, and is more conformable to the analogy of nature, than that which pretends to reſolve all friendſhip and humanity into this latter principle. There are bodily wants or appetites, acknowledged by every one, which neceſſarily precede all ſenſual enjoyment, and carry us directly to ſeek poſſeſſion of the object. Thus, hunger and thirſt have eating and drinking for their end; and from the gratification of theſe primary appetites ariſes a pleaſure, which may become the object of another ſpecies of deſire or inclination, that is ſecondary and intereſted. In the ſame manner, there are mental paſſions, by which we are impelled immediately to ſeek particular objects, ſuch as fame, or power, or vengeance, without any regard to intereſt; and when theſe objects are attained, a pleaſing enjoyment enſues, as the conſequence of our indulged affections. Nature muſt, by the internal frame and conſtitution of the mind, give an original propenſity to fame, ere we can reap any pleaſure from that acquiſition, or purſue it from motives of ſelf-love, and a deſire of happineſs. If I have no vanity, I take no delight in praiſe: If I be void of ambition, power gives me no enjoyment: If I be not angry,

gry, the punishment of an adversary is totally indifferent to me. In all these cases, there is a passion, which points immediately to the object, and constitutes it our good or happiness; as there are other secondary passions, which afterwards arise, and pursue it as a part of our happiness, when once it is constituted such by our original affections. Were no appetite of any kind antecedent to self-love, that propensity could scarcely ever exert itself; because we should, in that case, have felt few and slender pains or pleasures, and have little misery or happiness to avoid or to pursue.

Now where is the difficulty in conceiving, that this may likewise by the case with benevolence and friendship, and that, from the original frame of our temper, we may feel a desire of another's happiness or good, which, by means of that affection, becomes our own good, and is afterwards pursued, from the combined motives of benevolence and self-enjoyment? Who sees not that vengeance, from the force alone of passion, may be so eagerly pursued, as to make us knowingly neglect every consideration of ease, or safety; and, like some vindictive animals, infuse our very souls into the wounds we give an enemy *? And what a malignant philosophy must it be, that will not allow, to humanity and friendship, the same privileges, which are undisputably granted to the darker passions of enmity and resentment? Such a philosophy is more like a satyr than a true delineation or description of human nature; and may be a good foundation for paradoxical wit and raillery, but is a very bad one for any serious argument or reasoning.

APPENDIX

* Animasque in vulnere ponunt. VIRG.
Dum alteri noceat, sui negligens, says SENECA of Anger. De Ira, I. i.

APPENDIX III.

SOME FARTHER CONSIDERATIONS with regard to JUSTICE.

THE intention of this Appendix is to give ſome more particular explication of the origin and nature of Juſtice, and to mark ſome differences between it and the other virtues.

The ſocial virtues of humanity and benevolence exert their influence immediately, by a direct tendency or inſtinct, which chiefly keeps in view the ſimple object, moving the affections, and comprehends not any ſcheme or ſyſtem, nor the conſequences reſulting from the concurrence, imitation, or example of others. A parent flies to the relief of his child; tranſported by that natural ſympathy, which actuates him, and which affords no leiſure to reflect on the ſentiments or conduct of the reſt of mankind in like circumſtances. A generous man chearfully embraces an opportunity of ſerving his friend; becauſe he then feels himſelf under the dominion of the beneficent affections, nor is he concerned whether any other perſon in the univerſe were ever before actuated by ſuch noble motives, or will ever afterwards prove their influence. In all theſe caſes, the ſocial paſſions have in view a ſingle individual object, and purſue the ſafety or happineſs alone of the

the perſon loved and eſteemed. With this they are ſatisfied: In this, they acquieſce. And as the good, reſulting from their benign influence, is in itſelf compleat and entire, it alſo excites the moral ſentiment of approbation, without any reflection on farther conſequences, and without any more enlarged views of the concurrence or imitation of the other members of ſociety. On the contrary, were the generous friend or diſintereſted patriot to ſtand alone in the practice of beneficence; this would rather inhance his value in our eyes, and join the praiſe of rarity and novelty to his other more exalted merits.

The caſe is not the ſame with the ſocial virtues of juſtice and fidelity. They are highly uſeful, or indeed abſolutely neceſſary to the well-being of mankind: But the benefit, reſulting from them, is not the conſequence of every individual ſingle act; but ariſes form the whole ſcheme or ſyſtem, concurred in by the whole, or the greater part of the ſociety. General peace and order are the attendants of juſtice or a general abſtinence from the poſſeſſions of others: But a particular regard to the particular right of one individual citizen may frequently, conſidered in itſelf, be productive of pernicious conſequences. The reſult of the individual acts is here, in many inſtances, directly oppoſite to that of the whole ſyſtem of actions; and the former may be extremely hurtful, while the latter is, to the higheſt degree, advantageous. Riches, inherited from a parent, are, in a bad man's hand, the inſtrument of miſchief. The right of ſucceſſion may, in one inſtance, be hurtful. Its benefit ariſes only from the obſervance of the general rule; and it is ſufficient, if compenſation be thereby made for all the ills and inconveniencies, which flow from particular characters and ſituations.

Cyrus,

Cyrus, young and unexperienced, considered only the individual case before him, and reflected on a limited fitness and convenience, when he assigned the long coat to the tall boy, and the short coat to the other of smaller size. His governor instructed him better; while he pointed out more enlarged views and consequences, and informed his pupil of the general, inflexible rules, necessary to support general peace and order in society.

The happiness and prosperity of mankind, arising from the social virtue of benevolence and its subdivisions, may be compared to a wall, built by many hands; which still rises by each stone, that is heaped upon it, and receives increase proportional to the diligence and care of each workman. The same happiness, raised by the social virtue of justice and its subdivisions, may be compared to a building of a vault, where each individual stone would, of itself, fall to the ground; nor is the whole fabric supported but by the mutual assistance and combination of its corresponding parts.

All the laws of nature, which regulate property, as well as all civil laws, are general, and regard alone some essential circumstances of the case, without taking into consideration the characters, situations, and connexions of the person concerned, or any particular consequences which may result from the determination of these laws, in any particular case which offers. They deprive, without scruple, a beneficent man of all its possessions, if acquired by mistake, without a good title; in order to bestow them on a selfish miser, who has already heaped up immense stores of superfluous riches. Public utility requires, that property should be regulated by general inflexible rules; and though such rules are adopted as best serve the same end of public utility, it is impossible for them to prevent all particular hardships, or make beneficial conse-

consequences result from every individual case. It is sufficient, if the whole plan or scheme be necessary to the support of civil society, and if the balance of good, in the main, do thereby preponderate much above that of evil. Even the general laws of the universe, though planned by infinite wisdom, cannot exclude all evil or inconvenience, in every particular operation.

It has been asserted by some, that justice arises from Human Conventions, and proceeds from the voluntary choice, consent, or combination of mankind. If by *convention* be here meant a *promise* (which is the most usual sense of the word) nothing can be more absurd than this position. The observance of promises is itself one of the most considerable parts of justice; and we are not surely bound to keep our word, because we have given our word to keep it. But if by convention be meant a sense of common interest; which sense each man feels in his own breast, which he remarks in his fellows, and which carries him, in concurrence with others, into a general plan or system of actions, which tends to public utility; it must be owned, that, in this sense, justice arises from human conventions. For if it be allowed (what is, indeed, evident) that the particular consequences of a particular act of justice may be hurtful to the public as well as to individuals; it follows, that every man, in embracing that virtue, must have an eye to the whole plan or system, and must expect the concurrence of his fellows in the same conduct and behaviour. Did all his views terminate in the consequences of each act of his own, his benevolence and humanity, as well as his self-love, might often prescribe to him measures of conduct very different from those, which are agreeable to the strict rules of right and justice.

Thus

Thus two men pull the oars of a boat by common convention, for common interest, without any promise or contract: Thus gold and silver are made the measures of exchange; thus speech and words and language are fixed, by human convention and agreement. Whatever is advantageous to two or more persons, if all perform their part; but what loses all advantage, if only one perform, can arise from no other principle. There would otherwise be no motive for any one of them to enter into that scheme of conduct *.

The word, *natural*, is commonly taken in so many senses, and is of so loose a signification, that it seems vain to dispute, whether justice be natural or not. If self-love, if benevolence be natural to man; if reason and forethought be also natural; then may the same epithet be applied to justice, order, fidelity, property, society. Men's inclination, their necessities lead them to combine; their understanding and experience tell them, that this combination is impossible, where each governs himself by no rule, and pays no regard to the possessions of others: And from these passions and reflections conjoined, as soon as we observe like passions and reflections in others, the sentiment of justice, throughout all ages, has infallibly and certainly had place, to some degree or other, in every individual of the human species. In so sagacious an animal, what necessarily arises from the exertion of his intellectual faculties, may justly be esteemed natural †.

Among all civilized nations, it has been the constant endeavour to remove every thing arbitrary and partial from the decision of property, and to fix the sentence of judges by such general

* See NOTE [PP.]
† See NOTE [QQ].

ral views and conſiderations, as may be equal to every member of the ſociety. For beſides, that nothing could be more dangerous than to accuſtom the bench, even in the ſmalleſt inſtance, to regard private friendſhip or enmity; it is certain, that men, where they imagine, that there was no other reaſon for the preference of their adverſary but perſonal favour, are apt to entertain the ſtrongeſt ill-will againſt the magiſtrates and judges. When natural reaſon, therefore, points out no fixed view of public utility, by which a controverſy of property can be decided, poſitive laws are often framed to ſupply its place, and direct the procedure of all courts of judicature. Where theſe too fail, as often happens, precedents are called for; and a former deciſion, though given itſelf without any ſufficient reaſon, juſtly becomes a ſufficient reaſon for a new deciſion. If direct laws and precedents be wanting, imperfect and indirect ones are brought in aid; and the controverted caſe is ranged under them, by analogical reaſonings and compariſons, and ſimilitudes, and correſpondencies, which are often more fanciful than real. In general, it may ſafely be affirmed, that juriſprudence is, in this reſpect, different from all the ſciences; and that in many of its nicer queſtions, there cannot properly be ſaid to be truth or falſehood on either ſide. If one pleader bring the caſe under any former law or precedent, by a refined analogy or compariſon; the oppoſite pleader is not at a loſs to find an oppoſite analogy or compariſon: And the preference given by the judge is often founded more on taſte and imagination than on any ſolid argument. Public utility is the general object of all courts of judicature; and this utility too requires a ſtable rule in all controverſies: But where ſeveral rules, nearly equal and indifferent, preſent themſelves, it is a very ſlight

turn

turn of thought, which fixes the decision in favour of either party *.

We may just observe, before we conclude this subject, that, after the laws of justice are fixed by views of general utility, the injury, the hardship, the harm, which result to any individual from a violation of them, enter very much into consideration, and are a great source of that universal blame, which attends every wrong or iniquity. By the laws of society, this coat, this horse is mine, and *ought* to remain perpetually in my possession: I reckon on the secure enjoyment of it: By depriving me of it, you disappoint my expectations, and doubly displease me, and offend every bystander. It is a public wrong, so far as the rules of equity are violated: It is a private harm, so far as an individual is injured. And though the second consideration could have no place, were not the former previously established: For otherwise the distinction of *mine* and *thine* would be unknown in society: Yet there is no question, but the regard to general good is much enforced by the respect to particular. What injures the community, without hurting any individual, is often more lightly thought of. But where the greatest public wrong is also conjoined with a considerable private one, no wonder the highest disapprobation attends so iniquitous a behaviour.

* See NOTE [R R].

APPENDIX IV.

Of some Verbal Disputes.

NOthing is more uſual than for philoſophers to encroach upon the province of grammarians; and to engage in diſputes of words, while they imagine, that they are handling controverſies of the deepeſt importance and concern. It was in order to avoid altercations, ſo frivolous and endleſs, that I endeavoured to ſtate with the utmoſt caution the object of our preſent enquiry; and propoſed ſimply to collect on the one hand, a liſt of thoſe mental qualities which are the object of love or eſteem, and form a part of perſonal merit, and on the other hand, a catalogue of thoſe qualities, which are the object of cenſure or reproach, and which detract from the character of the perſon, poſſeſſed of them; ſubjoining ſome reflections concerning the origin of theſe ſentiments of praiſe or blame. On all occaſions, where there might ariſe the leaſt heſitation, I avoided the terms *virtue* and *vice*; becauſe ſome of thoſe qualities, which I claſſed among the objects of praiſe, receive, in the Engliſh language, the appellation of *talents*, rather than of virtues; as ſome of the blameable or cenſurable qualities are often called *defects*, rather than vices. It may now, perhaps, be expected, that, before we conclude this moral enquiry, we ſhould exactly ſeparate the one from the other; ſhould mark the preciſe boundaries of virtues

virtues and talents, vices and defects; and should explain the reason and origin of that distinction. But in order to excuse myself from this undertaking, which would, at last, prove only a grammatical enquiry, I shall subjoin the four following reflections, which shall contain all that I intend to say on the present subject.

First, I do not find, that in the English, or any other modern tongue, the boundaries are exactly fixed between virtues and talents, vices and defects, or that a precise definition can be given of the one as contradistinguished from the other. Were we to say, for instance, that the esteemable qualities alone, which are voluntary, are entitled to the appellation of virtues; we should soon recollect the qualities of courage, equanimity, patience, self-command; with many others, which almost every language classes under this appellation, though they depend little or not at all on our choice. Should we affirm, that the qualities alone, which prompt us to act our part in society, are entitled to that honourable distinction; it must immediately occur, that these are indeed the most valuable qualities, and are commonly denominated the *social* virtues; but that this very epithet supposes, that there are also virtues of another species. Should we lay hold of the distinction between *intellectual* and *moral* endowments, and affirm the last alone to be the real and genuine virtues, because they alone lead to action; we should find, that many of those qualities, usually called intellectual virtues, such as prudence, penetration, discernment, discretion, had also a considerable influence on conduct. The distinction between the *heart* and the *head* may also be adopted: The qualities of the first may be defined such as in their immediate exertion are accompanied with a feeling or sentiment; and these alone may be called the genuine virtues: But industry, frugality, temperance, secrecy, perseverance,

rance, and many other laudable powers or habits, generally ſtiled virtues, are exerted without any immediate ſentiment in the perſon poſſeſſed of them; and are only known to him by their effects. It is fortunate, amidſt all this ſeeming perplexity, that the queſtion, being merely verbal, cannot poſſibly be of any importance. A moral, philoſophical diſcourſe needs not enter into all theſe caprices of language, which are ſo variable in different dialects, and in different ages of the ſame dialect. But on the whole, it ſeems to me, that, though it is always allowed, that there are virtues of many different kinds, yet when a man is called *virtuous*, or is denominated a man of virtue, we chiefly regard his ſocial qualities, which are, indeed, the moſt valuable. It is, at the ſame time, certain, that any remarkable defect in courage, temperance, œconomy, induſtry, underſtanding, dignity of mind, would bereave even a very good-natured, honeſt man of this honourable appellation. Who did ever ſay, except by way of irony, that ſuch a one was a man of great virtue, but an egregious blockhead?

But, *ſecondly*, it is no wonder, that languages ſhould not be very preciſe in marking the boundaries between virtues and talents, vices and defects; ſince there is little diſtinction made in our internal eſtimation of them. It ſeems indeed certain, that the *ſentiment* of conſcious worth, the ſelf-ſatisfaction proceeding from a review of a man's own conduct and character; it ſeems certain, I ſay, that this ſentiment, which, though the moſt common of all others, has no proper name in our language *, ariſe from the endowments of courage and capacity, i- duſtry and ingenuity, as well as from any ot mental excellencies. Who, on the other hand, not deeply mortified with reflecting on his o folly and diſſoluteneſs, and feels not a ſecret ſti

* See NOTE [SS].

or compunction, whenever his memory presents any past occurrence, where he behaved with stupidity or ill-manners? No time can efface the cruel ideas of a man's own foolish conduct, or of affronts, which cowardice or impudence has brought upon him. They still haunt his solitary hours, damp his most aspiring thoughts, and shew him, even to himself, in the most contemptible and most odious colours imaginable.

What is there too we are more anxious to conceal from others than such blunders, infirmities, and meannesses, or more dread to have exposed by raillery and satire? And is not the chief object of vanity, our bravery or learning, our wit or breeding, our eloquence or address, our taste or abilities? These we display with care, if not with ostentation; and we commonly show more ambition of excelling in them, than even in the social virtues themselves, which are, in reality, of such superior excellence. Good-nature and honesty, especially the latter, are so indispensably required, that, though the greatest censure attends any violation of these duties, no eminent praise follows such common instances of them, as seem essential to the support of human society. And hence the reason, in my opinion, why, though men often extol so liberally the qualities of their heart, they are shy in commending the endowments of their head: Because the latter virtues, being supposed more rare and extraordinary, are observed to be ...he more usual objects of pride and self-conceit; ...d when boasted of, beget a strong suspicion of ... sentiments.

... is hard to tell, whether you hurt a man's cha... ...er most by calling him a knave or a coward, ... whether a beastly glutton or drunkard be not as ...ous and contemptible, as a selfish, ungenerous ...er. Give me my choice, and I would rather, ... my own happiness and self-enjoyment, have a friendly,

friendly, humane heart, than poſſeſs all the other virtues of Demoſthenes and Philip united: But I would rather paſs with the world for one endowed with extenſive genius and intrepid courage, and ſhould thence expect ſtronger inſtances of general applauſe and admiration. The figure which a man makes in life, the reception which he meets with in company, the eſteem paid him by his acquaintance; all theſe advantages depend as much upon his good ſenſe and judgment, as upon any other part of his character. Had a man the beſt intentions in the world, and were the fartheſt removed from all injuſtice and violence, he would never be able to make himſelf be much regarded, without a moderate ſhare, at leaſt, of parts and underſtanding.

What is it then we can here diſpute about? If ſenſe and courage, temperance and induſtry, wiſdom and knowledge confeſſedly form a conſiderable part of *perſonal merit*: if a man, poſſeſſed of theſe qualities, is both better ſatisfied with himſelf, and better entitled to the good-will, eſteem, and ſervices of others, than one entirely deſtitute of them; if, in ſhort, the *ſentiments* are ſimilar, which ariſe from theſe endowments and from the ſocial virtues; is there any reaſon for being ſo extremely ſcrupulous about a *word*, or diſputing whether they be entitled to the denomination of virtues? It may, indeed, be pretended, that the ſentiment of approbation, which thoſe accompliſhments produce, beſides its being *inferior*, is alſo ſomewhat *different* from that, which attends the virtues of juſtice and humanity. But this ſeems not ſufficient reaſon for ranking them entirely under different claſſes and appellations. The character of Cæſar and that of Cato, as drawn by Salluſt, are both of them virtuous, in the ſtricteſt and moſt limited ſenſe of the word; but in a different way: Nor are the ſentiments entirely the ſame, which ariſe from them. The one is ami-

able; the other awful: We ſhould wiſh to meet the one character in a friend; the other we ſhould be ambitious of in ourſelves. In like manner the approbation, which attends temperance or induſtry or frugality, may be ſomewhat different from that which is paid to the ſocial virtues, without making them entirely of a different ſpecies. And, indeed, we may obſerve, that theſe endowments, more than the other virtues, produce not, all of them, the ſame kind of approbation. Good ſenſe and genius beget eſteem and regard: Wit and humour excite love and affection *

Moſt people, I believe, will naturally, without premeditation, aſſent to the definition of the elegant and judicious poet.

Virtue (for mere good-nature is a fool)
Is ſenſe and ſpirit with humanity †.

What pretenſions has a man to our generous aſſiſtance or good offices, who has diſſipated his wealth in profuſe expences, ide vanities, chimerical projects, diſſolute pleaſures, or extravagant gaming? Theſe vices (for we ſcruple not to call them ſuch) bring miſery unpitied, and contempt on every one addicted to them.

Achæus, a wiſe and prudent prince, fell into a fatal ſnare, which coſt him his crown and life, after having uſed every reaſonable precaution to guard himſelf againſt it. On that account, ſays the hiſtorian, he is a juſt object of regard and compaſſion: His betrayers alone of hatred and contempt ‡.

The precipitate flight and improvident negligence of Pompey, at the beginning of the civil wars, appeared ſuch notorious blunders to Cicero, as quite palled his friendſhip towards that great man. *In the ſame manner*, ſays he, *as want of cleanlineſs, decency, or diſcretion in a miſtreſs are found to alienate our affections.*

* See NOTE [TT].
† The Art of preſerving Health, Book 4.
‡ POLYBIUS, lib. viii. cap. 2.

fections. For ſo he expreſſes himſelf, where he talks, not in the character of a philoſopher, but in that of a ſtateſman and man of the world, to his friend Atticus *.

But the ſame Cicero, in imitation of all the ancient moraliſts, when he reaſons as a philoſopher, enlarges very much his ideas of virtue, and comprehends every laudable quality or endowment of the mind, under that honourable appellation. This leads to the *third* reflection, which we propoſed to make, to wit, that the ancient moraliſts, the beſt models, made no material diſtinction among the different ſpecies of mental endowments and defects, but treated all alike under the appellation of virtues and vices, and made them indiſcriminately the object of their moral reaſonings. The *prudence* explained in Cicero's *Offices* †, is that ſagacity, which leads to the diſcovery of truth, and preſerves us from error and miſtake. *Magnanimity*, *temperance*, *decency*, are there alſo at large diſcourſed of. And as that eloquent moraliſt followed the common received diviſion of the four cardinal virtues, our ſocial duties form but one head, in the general diſtribution of his ſubject ‡.

We need only peruſe the titles of chapters in Ariſtotle's Ethics to be convinced, that he ranks courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, modeſty, prudence, and a manly openneſs, among the virtues, as well as juſtice and friendſhip.

To *ſuſtain* and to *abſtain*, that is, to be patient and continent, appeared to ſome of the ancients a ſummary comprehenſion of all morals.

Epictetus has ſcarcely ever mentioned the ſentiment of humanity or compaſſion, but in order to put his diſciples on their guard againſt it. The virtue of the *Stoics* ſeems to conſiſt chiefly in a firm temper and a ſound underſtanding. With them, as

* Lib. ix. epiſt. 10. † Lib. i. cap. 6.
‡ See NOTE [UU].

as with Solomon and the eaſtern moraliſts, folly and wiſdom are equivalent to vice and virtue.

Men will praiſe thee, ſays David *, when thou doſt well unto thyſelf. I hate a wiſe man, ſays the Greek poet, who is not wiſe to himſelf †.

Plutarch is no more cramped by ſyſtems in his philoſophy than in his hiſtory. Where he compares the great men of Greece and Rome, he fairly ſets in oppoſition all their blemiſhes and accompliſhments of whatever kind, and omits nothing conſiderable, which can either depreſs or exalt their characters. His moral diſcourſes contain the ſame free and natural cenſure of men and manners.

The character of Hannibal, as drawn by Livy ‡, is eſteemed partial, but allows him many eminent virtues. Never was there a genius, ſays the hiſtorian, more equally fitted for thoſe oppoſite offices of commanding and obeying; and it were, therefore, difficult to determine whether he rendered himſelf *dearer* to the general or to the army. To none would Haſdrubal entruſt more willingly the conduct of any dangerous enterprize; under none, did the ſoldiers diſcover more courage and confidence. Great boldneſs in facing danger; great prudence in the midſt of it. No labour could fatigue his body or ſubdue his mind. Cold and heat were indifferent to him: Meat and drink he ſought as ſupplies to the neceſſities of nature, not as gratifications of his voluptuous appetites? Waking or reſt he uſed indiſcriminately, by night or by day.——Theſe great Virtues were balanced by great Vices: Inhuman cruelty, perfidy more than *punic*; no truth, no faith, no regard to oaths, promiſes, or religion.

The character of Alexander the Sixth, to be found in Guicciardin §, is pretty ſimilar, but juſter; and is a proof, that even the moderns, where they ſpeak

* Pſalm 49th.

† Μισω σοφιστην οστις ουκ αυτω σοφος. EURIPIDES.

‡ Lib. xxi. cap. 4.

§ Lib. i.

ſpeak naturally, hold the ſame language with the ancients. In this pope, ſays he, there was a ſingular capacity and judgment: Admirable prudence; a wonderful talent of perſuaſion; and in all momentous enterprizes, a diligence and dexterity incredible. But theſe *virtues* were infinitely overbalanced by his *vices*; no faith, no religion, inſatiable avarice, exorbitant ambition, and a more than barbarous cruelty.

Polybius †, reprehending Timæus for his partiality againſt Agathocles, whom he himſelf allows to be the moſt cruel and impious of all tyrants, ſays: If he took refuge in Syracuſe, as aſſerted by that hiſtorian, flying the dirt and ſmoke and toil of his former profeſſion of a potter; and if proceeding from ſuch ſlender beginnings, he became maſter, in a little time, of all Sicily; brought the Carthaginian ſtate into the utmoſt danger; and at laſt died in old age, and in poſſeſſion of ſovereign dignity: Muſt he not be allowed ſomething prodigious and extraordinary, and to have poſſeſſed great talents and capacity for buſineſs and action? His hiſtorian, therefore, ought not to have alone related what tended to his reproach and infamy; but alſo what might redound to his Praiſe and Honour.

In general, we may obſerve, that the diſtinction of voluntary or involuntary was little regarded by the ancients in their moral reaſonings; where they frequently treated the queſtion as very doubtful, *whether virtue could be taught or not* *? They juſtly conſidered, that cowardice, meanneſs, levity, anxiety, impatience, folly, and many other qualities of the mind, might appear ridiculous and deformed, contemptible and odious, though independent of the will. Nor could it be ſuppoſed, at all times, in

† Lib. xii.

* Vid. Plato in Menone, Seneca *de otio ſap.* cap. 31. So alſo Horace, *Virtutem doctrina, paret, naturane donet.* Epiſt. lib. i. ep. 18. Æschines Socraticus. Dial. 1.

in every man's power to attain every kind of mental, more than of exterior beauty.

And here there occurs the *fourth* reflection which I purposed to make, in suggesting the reason, why modern philosophers have often followed a course, in their moral enquiries, so different from that of the ancients. In later times, philosophy of all kinds, especially ethics, have been more closely united with theology than ever they were observed to be among the Heathens; and as this latter science admits of no terms of composition, but bends every branch of knowledge to its own purpose, without much regard to the phænomena of nature, or to the unbiassed sentiments of the mind, hence reasoning, and even language, have been warped from their natural course, and distinctions have been endeavoured to be established, where the difference of the object was, in a manner, imperceptible. Philosophers, or rather divines under that disguise, treating all morals, as on a like footing with civil laws, guarded by the sanctions of reward and punishment, were necessarily led to render this circumstance, of *voluntary* or *involuntary*, the foundation of their whole theory. Every one may employ *terms* in what sense he pleases: But this, in the mean time, must be allowed, that *sentiments* are every day experienced of blame and praise, which have objects beyond the dominion of the will or choice, and of which it behoves us, if not as moralists, as speculative philosophers at least, to give some satisfactory theory and explication.

A blemish, a fault, a vice, a crime; these expressions seem to denote different degrees of censure and disapprobation; which are, however, all of them, at the bottom, pretty nearly of the same kind or species. The explication of one will easily lead us into a just conception of the others; and it is of greater consequence to attend to things than to verbal

bal appellations. That we owe a duty to ourſelves is confeſſed even in the moſt vulgar ſyſtem of morals; and it muſt be of conſequence to examine that duty, in order to ſee, whether it bears any affinity to that which we owe to ſociety. It is probable, that the approbation, attending the obſervance of both, is of a ſimilar nature, and ariſes from ſimilar principles; whatever appellation we may give to either of theſe excellencies.

A DIA-

A

DIALOGUE.

MY friend, Palamedes, who is as great a rambler in his principles as in his perſon, who has run over, by ſtudy and travel, almoſt every region of the intellectual and material world, ſurprized me lately with an account of a nation, with whom, he told me, he had paſſed a conſiderable part of his life, and whom, he found, in the main, a people extremely civilized and intelligent.

There is a country, ſaid he, in the world, called Fourli, no matter for its longitude or latitude, whoſe inhabitants have ways of thinking, in many things, particularly in morals, diametrically oppoſite to ours. When I came among them, I found that I muſt ſubmit to double pains; firſt to learn the meaning of the terms in their language, and then to know the import of thoſe terms, and the praiſe or blame attached to them. After a word had been explained to me, and the character, which it expreſſed, had been deſcribed, I concluded, that ſuch an epithet muſt neceſſarily be the greateſt reproach in the world; and was extremely ſurprized to find one in a public company, apply it to a perſon, with whom he lived in the ſtricteſt intimacy and friendſhip.

You

You fancy, ſaid I one day, to an acquaintance, *that* Changuis *is your mortal enemy: I love to extinguiſh quarrels*; *aud I muſt, therefore, tell you, that I heard him talk of you in the moſt obliging manner*. But to my great aſtoniſhment, when I repeated Changuis's words, though I had both remembered and underſtood them perfectly, I found, that they were taken for the moſt mortal affront, and that I had very innocently rendered the breach between theſe perſons altogether irreparable.

As it was my fortune to come among this people on a very advantageous footing, I was immediately introduced to the beſt company; and being deſired by Alcheic to live with him, I readily accepted of his invitation; as I found him univerſally eſteemed for his perſonal merit, and indeed regarded by every one in Fourli, as a perfect character.

One evening he invited me, as an amuſement, to bear him company in a ſerenade, which he intended to give to Gulki, with whom, he told me, he was extremely enamoured; and I ſoon found that his taſte was not ſingular: For we met many of his rivals, who had come on the ſame errand. I very naturally concluded, that this miſtreſs of his muſt be one of the fineſt women in town; and I already felt a ſecret inclination to ſee her, and be acquainted with her. But as the moon began to riſe, I was much ſurprized to find, that we were in the midſt of the univerſity, where Gulki ſtudied: And I was ſomewhat aſhamed for having attended my friend, on ſuch an errand.

I was afterwards told, that Alcheic's choice of Gulki was very much approved of by all the good company in town; and that it was expected, while he gratified his own paſſion, he would perform to that young man the ſame good office, which he had himſelf owed to Elcouf. It ſeems Alcheic had been very handſome in his youth, had been courted by many lovers; but had beſtowed

beftowed his favours chiefly on the fage Elcoulf; to whom he was fuppofed to owe, in great meafure, the aftonifhing progrefs which he had made in philofophy and virtue.

It gave me fome furprize, that Alcheic's wife (who by-the-bye happened alfo to be his fifter) was no wife fcandalized at this fpecies of infidelity.

Much about the fame time I difcovered (for it was not attempted to be kept a fecret from me or any body) that Alcheic was a murderer and a parricide, and had put to death an innocent perfon, the moft nearly connected with him, and whom he was bound to protect and defend by all the ties of nature and humanity. When I afked, with all the caution and deference imaginable, what was his motive for this action; he replied coolly, that he was not then fo much at eafe in his circumftances as he is at prefent, and that he had acted, in that particular, by the advice of all his friends.

Having heard Alcheic's virtue fo extremely celebrated, I pretended to join in the general voice of acclamation, and only afked, by way of curiofity, as a ftranger, which of all his noble actions was moft highly applauded; and I foon found, that all fentiments were united in giving the preference to the affaffination of Ufbek. This Ufbek had been to the laft moment Alcheic's intimate friend, had laid many high obligations upon him, had even faved his life on a certain occafion, and had, by his will, which was found after the murder, made him heir to a confiderable part of his fortune. Alcheic, it feems, confpired with about twenty or thirty more, moft of them alfo Ufbek's friends; and falling all together on that unhappy man, when he was not aware, they had torne him with a hundred wounds; and given him that reward for his paft favours

and

and obligations. Usbek, said the general voice of the people, had many great and good qualities: His very vices were shining, magnificent, and generous: But this action of Alcheic's sets him far above Usbek in the eyes of all judges of merit; and is one of the noblest that ever perhaps the sun shone upon.

Another part of Alcheic's conduct, which I also found highly applauded, was his behaviour towards Calish, with whom he was joined in a project or undertaking of some importance. Calish, being a passionate man, gave Alcheic, one day, a sound drubbing; which he took very patiently, waited the return of Calish's good-humour, kept still a fair correspondence with him; and by that means brought the affair, in which they were joined, to a happy issue, and gained to himself immortal honour by his remarkable temper and moderation.

I have lately received a letter from a correspondent in Fourli, by which I learn, that, since my departure, Alcheic, falling into a bad state of health, has fairly hanged himself; and has died universally regretted and applauded in that country. So virtuous and noble a life, says each Fourlian, could not be better crowned than by so noble an end; and Alcheic has proved by this, as well as by all his other actions, what he boasted of near his last moments, that a wise man is scarcely inferior to the great god, Vitzli. This is the name of the supreme deity among the Fourlians.

The notions of this people, continued Palamedes, are as extraordinary with regard to good-manners and sociableness, as with regard to morals. My friend Alcheic formed once a party for my entertainment, composed of all the prime wits and philosophers of Fourli; and each of us brought his mess along with him to the place where

where we aſſembled. I obſerved one of them to be worſe provided than the reſt, and offered him a ſhare of my meſs, which happened to be a roaſted pullet: And I could not but remark, that he and all the reſt of the company ſmiled at my ſimplicity. I was told, that Alcheic had once ſo much intereſt with this club as to prevail with them to eat in common, and that he had made uſe of an artifice for that purpoſe. He perſuaded thoſe, whom he obſerved to be *worſt* provided, to offer their meſs to the company; after which, the others, who had brought more delicate fare, were aſhamed not to make the ſame offer. This is regarded as ſo extraordinary an event, that it has ſince, as I learn, been recorded in the hiſtory of Alcheic's life, compoſed by one of the greateſt geniuſes of Fourli.

Pray, ſaid I, Palamedes, when you were at Fourli, did you alſo learn the art of turning your friends into ridicule, by telling them ſtrange ſtories, and then laughing at them, if they believed you. I aſſure you, replied he, had I been diſpoſed to learn ſuch a leſſon, there was no place in the world more proper. My friend, ſo often mentioned, did nothing, from morning to night, but ſneer, and banter, and rally; and you could ſcarcely ever diſtinguiſh, whether he were in jeſt or earneſt. But you think then, that my ſtory is improbable; and that I have uſed, or rather abuſed the privilege of a traveller. To be ſure, ſaid I, you were but in jeſt. Such barbarous and ſavage manners are not only incompatible with a civilized, intelligent people, ſuch as you ſaid theſe were; but ſcarcely compatible with human nature. They exceed all we ever read of, among the Mingrelians, and Topinamboues.

Have a care, cried he, have a care! You are not

not aware that you are ſpeaking blaſphemy, and are abuſing your favourites, the Greeks, eſpecially the Athenians, whom I have couched, all along, under theſe bizarre names I employed. If you conſider aright, there is not one ſtroke of the foregoing character, which might not be found in the man of higheſt merit at Athens, without diminiſhing in the leaſt from the brightneſs of his character. The amours of the Greeks, their marriages *, and the expoſing of their children cannot but ſtrike you immediately. The death of Uſbek is an exact counter-part to that of Cæſar.

All to a trifle, ſaid I, interrupting him: You did not mention that Uſbek was an uſurper.

I did not, replied he; leſt you ſhould diſcover the parallel I aimed at. But even adding this circumſtance, we ſhould make no ſcruple, according to our ſentiments of morals, to denominate Brutus, and Caſſius, ungrateful traitors and aſſaſſins: Though you know, that they are, perhaps, the higheſt characters of all antiquity; and the Athenians erected ſtatues to them; which they placed near thoſe of Harmodius and Ariſtogiton, their own deliverers. And if you think this circumſtance, which you mention, ſo material to abſolve theſe patriots, I ſhall compenſate it by another, not mentioned, which will equally aggravate their crime. A few days before the execution of their fatal purpoſe, they all ſwore fealty to Cæſar; and proteſting to hold his perſon ever ſacred, they touched the altar with thoſe hands, which they had already armed for his deſtruction †.

I need not remind you of the famous and applauded

* The laws of Athens allowed a man to marry his ſiſter by the father. Solon's law forbid pæderaſty to ſlaves, as being an act of too great dignity for ſuch mean perſons.

† Appian. Bell. Civ. lib. iii. Suetonius in vita Cæſaris.

plauded ſtory of Themiſtocles, and of his patience towards Eurybiades, the Spartan, his commanding officer, who, heated by debate, lifted his cane to him in a council of war (the ſame thing as if he had cudgelled him), *Strike!* cries the Athenian, *ſtrike! but hear me.*

You are too good a ſcholar not to diſcover the ironical Socrates and his Athenian club in my laſt ſtory; and you will certainly obſerve, that it is exactly copied from Xenophon, with a variation only of the names *. And I think I have fairly made it appear, that an Athenian man of merit might be ſuch a one as with us would paſs for inceſtuous, a parricide, an aſſaſſin, ungrateful, perjured traitor, and ſomething elſe too abominable to be named; not to mention his ruſticity and ill-manners. And having lived in this manner, his death might be entirely ſuitable: He might conclude the ſcene by a deſperate act of ſelf-murder, and die with the moſt abſurd blaſphemies in his mouth. And notwithſtanding all this, he ſhall have ſtatues, if not altars, erected to his memory; poems and orations ſhall be compoſed in his praiſe; great ſects ſhall be proud of calling themſelves by his name; and the moſt diſtant poſterity ſhall blindly continue their admiration: Though were ſuch a one to ariſe among themſelves, they would juſtly regard him with horror and execration.

I might have been aware, replied I, of your artifice. You ſeem to take pleaſure in this topic: and are indeed the only man I ever knew, who was well acquainted with the ancients, and did not extremely admire them. But inſtead of attacking their philoſophy, their eloquence, or poetry, the uſual ſubjects of controverſy between us, you now ſeem to impeach their morals, and accuſe

* Mem. Soc. lib. iii. ſub. fine.

accuse them of ignorance in a science, which is the only one, in my opinion, in which they are not surpassed by the moderns. Geometry, physics, astronomy, anatomy, botany, geography, navigation; in these we justly claim the superiority: But what have we to oppose to their moralists? Your representation of things is fallacious. You have no indulgence for the manners and customs of different ages. Would you try a Greek or Roman by the common law of England? Hear him defend himself by his own maxims; and then pronounce.

There are no manners so innocent or reasonable, but may be rendered odious or ridiculous, if measured by a standard, unknown to the persons; especially, if you employ a little art or eloquence, in aggravating some circumstances, and extenuating others, as best suits the purpose of your discourse. All these artifices may easily be retorted on you. Could I inform the Athenians, for instance, that there was a nation, in which adultery, both active and passive, so to speak, was in the highest vogue and esteem: In which every man of education chose for his mistress a married woman, the wife, perhaps, of his friend and companion; and valued himself upon these infamous conquests, as much as if he had been several times a conqueror in boxing or wrestling at the *Olympic* games: In which every man also took a pride in his tameness and facility with regard to his own wife, and was glad to make friends or gain interest by allowing her to prostitute her charms; and even, without any such motive, gave her full liberty and indulgence: I ask, what sentiments the Athenians would entertain of such a people; they who never mentioned the crime of adultery but in conjunction with robbery and poisoning? Which would they admire most, the villany or the meanness of such a conduct?

Should I add, that the same people were as proud of their slavery and dependance as the Athenians of their liberty; and though a man among them were oppressed,

disgraced, impoverished, insulted, or imprisoned by the tyrant, he would still regard it as the highest merit to love, serve, and obey him; and even to die for his smallest glory or satisfaction: These noble Greeks would probably ask me, whether I spoke of a human society, or of some inferior, servile species.

It was then I might inform my Athenian audience, that these people, however, wanted not spirit and bravery. If a man, say I, though their intimate friend, should throw out, in a private company, a raillery against them, nearly approaching any of those, with which your generals and demagogues every day regale each other, in the face of the whole city, they never can forgive him; but in order to revenge themselves, they oblige him immediately to run them through the body, or be himself murdered. And if a man, who is an absolute stranger to them, should desire them, at the peril of their own life, to cut the throat of their bosom-companion, they immediately obey, and think themselves highly obliged and honoured by the commission. These are their maxims of honour: This is their favourite morality.

But though so ready to draw their sword against their friends and countrymen; no disgrace, no infamy, no pain, no poverty will ever engage these people to turn the point of it against their own breast. A man of rank would row in the gallies, would beg his bread, would languish in prison, would suffer any tortures; and still preserve his wretched life. Rather than escape his enemies by a generous contempt of death, he would infamously receive the same death from his enemies, aggravated by their triumphant insults, and by the most exquisite sufferings.

It is very usual too, continue I, among this people to erect jails, where every art of plaguing and tor-

tormenting the unhappy priſoners is carefully ſtudied and practiſed: And in theſe jails it is uſual for a parent voluntarily to ſhut up ſeveral of his children; in order, that another child, whom he owns to have no greater or rather leſs merit than the reſt, may enjoy his whole fortune, and wallow in every kind of voluptuouſneſs and pleaſure. Nothing ſo virtuous in their opinion as this barbarous partiality.

But what is more ſingular in this whimſical nation, ſay I to the Athenians, is, that a frolic of yours during the Saturnalia *, when the ſlaves are ſerved by their maſters, is ſeriouſly continued by them throughout the whole year, and throughout the whole courſe of their lives; accompanied too with ſome circumſtances, which ſtill farther augment the abſurdity and ridicule. Your ſport only elevates for a few days thoſe whom fortune has thrown down, and whom ſhe too, in ſport, may really elevate for ever above you: But this nation gravely exalts thoſe, whom nature has ſubjected to them, and whoſe inferiority and infirmities are abſolutely incurable. The women, though without virtue, are their maſters and ſovereigns: Theſe they reverence, praiſe, and magnify: To theſe, they pay the higheſt deference and reſpect: And in all places and all times, the ſuperiority of the females is readily acknowledged and ſubmitted to by every one, who has the leaſt pretenſions to education and politeneſs. Scarce any crime would be ſo univerſally deteſted as an infraction of this rule.

You need go no further, replied Palamedes; I can eaſily conjecture the people whom you aim at. The ſtrokes, with which you have painted them, are pretty juſt; and yet you muſt acknowledge, that ſcarce any people are to be found, either in ancient

* The Greeks kept the feaſt of Saturn or Chronus, as well as the Romans. See Lucian. Epiſt. Saturn.

ancient or modern times, whoſe national character is, upon the whole, leſs liable to exception. But I give you thanks for helping me out with my argument. I had no intention of exalting the moderns at the expence of the ancients. I only meant to repreſent the uncertainty of all theſe judgments concerning characters; and to convince you, that faſhion, vogue, cuſtom, and law, were the chief foundation of all moral determinations. The Athenians ſurely, were a civilized, intelligent people, if ever there were one; and yet their man of merit might, in this age, be held in horror and execration. The French are alſo, without doubt, a very civilized, intelligent people; and yet their man of merit might, with the Athenians, be an object of the higheſt contempt and ridicule, and even hatred. And what renders the matter more extraordinary: Theſe two people are ſuppoſed to be the moſt ſimilar in their national character of any in ancient and modern times; and while the Engliſh flatter themſelves that they reſemble the Romans, their neighbours on the continent draw the parallel between themſelves and thoſe polite Greeks. What wide difference, therefore, in the ſentiments of morals, muſt be found between civilized nations and Barbarians, or between nations whoſe characters have little in common? How ſhall we pretend to fix a ſtandard for judgments of this nature?

By tracing matters, replied I, a little higher, and examining the firſt principles, which each nation eſtabliſhes, of blame or cenſure. The Rhine flows north, the Rhone ſouth; yet both ſpring from the *ſame* mountain, and are alſo actuated, in their oppoſite directions, by the *ſame* principle of gravity. The different inclinations of the ground, on which they run, cauſe all the difference of their courſes.

In how many circumſtances would an Athenian and a French man of merit certainly reſemble each other? Good ſenſe, knowledge, wit, eloquence, humanity, fidelity, truth, juſtice, courage, temperance, conſtancy, dignity of mind: Theſe you have all omitted; in order to inſiſt only on the points, in which they may, by accident, differ. Very well: I am willing to comply with you; and ſhall endeavour to account for theſe differences from the moſt univerſal, eſtabliſhed principles of morals.

The Greek loves, I care not to examine more particularly. I ſhall only obſerve, that, however blameable, they aroſe from a very innocent cauſe, the frequency of the gymnaſtic exerciſes among that people; and were recommended, though abſurdly, as the ſource of friendſhip, ſympathy, mutual attachment, and fidelity*; qualities eſteemed in all nations and all ages.

The marriage of half-brothers and ſiſters ſeems no great difficulty. Love between the nearer relations is contrary to reaſon and public utility; but the preciſe point, where we are to ſtop, can ſcarcely be determined by natural reaſon; and is therefore a very proper ſubject for municipal law or cuſtom. If the Athenians went a little too far on the one ſide, the canon law has ſurely puſhed matters a great way into the other extreme †.

Had you aſked a parent at Athens, why he bereaved his child of that life, which he had ſo lately given it. It is becauſe I love it, he would reply; and regard the poverty which it muſt inherit from me, as a greater evil than death, which it is not capable of dreading, feeling, or reſenting ‡.

How

* Plat. ſymp. p. 182. Ex edit. Ser.
† See Enquiry, Sect. IV.
‡ Plut. de amore prolis, ſub fine.

How is public liberty, the moſt valuable of all bleſſings, to be recovered from the hands of an uſurper or tyrant, if his power ſhields him from public rebellion, and our ſcruples from private vengeance? That his crime is capital by law, you acknowledge: And muſt the higheſt aggravation of his crime, the putting of himſelf above law, form his full ſecurity? You can reply nothing, but by ſhowing the great inconveniences of aſſaſſination; which could any one have proved clearly to the ancients, he had reformed their ſentiments in this particular.

Again, to caſt your eye on the picture which I have drawn of modern manners; there is almoſt as great difficulty, I acknowledge, to juſtify French as Greek gallantry; except only, that the former is much more natural and agreeable than the latter. But our neighbours, it ſeems, have reſolved to ſacrifice ſome of the domeſtic to the ſociable pleaſures; and to prefer eaſe, freedom, and an open commerce, to a ſtrict fidelity and conſtancy. Theſe ends are both good, and are ſomewhat difficult to reconcile; nor need we be ſurpriſed, if the cuſtoms of nations incline too much, ſometimes to the one ſide, ſometimes to the other.

The moſt inviolable attachment to the laws of our country is every where acknowledged a capital virtue; and where the people are not ſo happy, as to have any legiſlature but a ſingle perſon, the ſtricteſt loyalty is, in that caſe, the trueſt patriotiſm.

Nothing ſurely can be more abſurd and barbarous than the practice of duelling; but thoſe, who juſtify it, ſay, that it begets civility and good-manners. And a duelliſt, you may obſerve, always values himſelf upon his courage, his ſenſe of honour, his fidelity and friendſhip; qualities, which are here indeed very oddly directed, but which have been eſteemed univerſally, ſince the foundation of the world.

Have

Have the gods forbid ſelf-murder? An Athenian allows, that it ought to be forborn. Has the Deity permitted it? A Frenchman allows, that death is preferable to pain and infamy.

You ſee then, continued I, that the principles upon which men reaſon in morals are always the ſame; though the concluſions which they draw are often very different. That they all reaſon aright with regard to this ſubject, more than with regard to any other, it is not incumbent on any moraliſt to ſhow. It is ſufficient, that the original principles of cenſure or blame are uniform, and that erroneous concluſions can be corrected by ſounder reaſoning and larger experience. Though many ages have elapſed ſince the fall of Greece and Rome; though many changes have arrived in religion, language, laws, and cuſtoms; none of theſe revolutions has ever produced any conſiderable innovation in the primary ſentiments of morals, more than in thoſe of external beauty. Some minute differences, perhaps, may be obſerved in both. Horace * celebrates a low forehead, and Anacreon joined eye-brows †: But the Apollo and the Venus of antiquity are ſtill our models for male and female beauty; in like manner as the character of Scipio continues our ſtandard for the glory of heroes, and that of Cornelia for the honour of matrons.

It appears, that there never was any quality recommended by any one, as a virtue or moral excellence, but on account of its being *uſeful*, or *agreeable* to a man *himſelf*, or to *others*. For what other reaſon can ever be aſſigned for praiſe or approbation? Or where would be the ſenſe of extolling a *good* character or action, which, at the ſame time,

* Epiſt. lib. i. epiſt. 7. Alſo lib. i. ode 3.

† Ode 28. Petronius (cap. 86.) joins both theſe circumſtances as beauties.

time, is allowed to be *good for nothing*? All the differences, therefore, in morals, may be reduced to this one general foundation, and may be accounted for by the different views, which people take of these circumstances.

Sometimes men differ in their judgment about the usefulness of any habit or action: Sometimes also the peculiar circumstances of things render one moral quality more useful than others, and give it a peculiar preference.

It is not surprising, that, during a period of war and disorder, the military virtues should be more celebrated than the pacific, and attract more the admiration and attention of mankind. "How "usual is it," says Tully *, "to find Cimbrians, "Celtiberians, and other Barbarians, who bear, "with inflexible constancy, all the fatigues and "dangers of the field; but are immediately dis-"pirited under the pain and hazard of a languish-"ing distemper: While, on the other hand, the "Greeks patiently endure the slow approaches of "death, when armed with sickness and disease; "but timorously fly his presence, when he attacks "them violently with swords and falchions!" So different is even the same virtue of courage among warlike or peaceful nations! And indeed, we may observe, that, as the difference between war and peace is the greatest that arises among nations and public societies, it produces also the greatest variations in moral sentiment, and diversifies the most our ideas of virtue and personal merit.

Sometimes too, magnanimity, greatness of mind, disdain of slavery, inflexible rigour and integrity, may better suit the circumstances of one age than those of another, and have a more kindly influence, both on public affairs, and on a man's own safety

* Tusc. Quæst. lib. ii.

ſafety and advancement. Our idea of merit, therefore, will alſo vary a little with theſe variations; and Labeo, perhaps, be cenſured for the ſame qualities, which procured Cato the higheſt approbation.

A degree of luxury may be ruinous and pernicious in a native of Switzerland, which only foſters the arts, and encourages induſtry in a Frenchman or Engliſhman. We are not, therefore, to expect, either the ſame ſentiments, or the ſame laws in Berne, which prevail in London or Paris.

Different cuſtoms have alſo ſome influence as well as different utilities; and by giving an early biaſs to the mind, may produce a ſuperior propenſity, either to the uſeful or the agreeable qualities; to thoſe which regard ſelf, or thoſe which extend to ſociety. Theſe four ſources of moral ſentiment ſtill ſubſiſt; but particular accidents may, at one time, make any one of them flow with greater abundance than at another.

The cuſtoms of ſome nations ſhut up the women from all ſocial commerce: Thoſe of others make them ſo eſſential a part of ſociety and converſation, that, except where buſineſs is tranſacted, the male-ſex alone are ſuppoſed almoſt wholly incapable of mutual diſcourſe and entertainment. As this difference is the moſt material that can happen in private life, it muſt alſo produce the greateſt variation in our moral ſentiments.

Of all nations in the world, where polygamy was not allowed, the Greeks ſeem to have been the moſt reſerved in their commerce with the fair ſex, and to have impoſed on them the ſtricteſt laws of modeſty and decency. We have a ſtrong inſtance of this in an oration of Lyſias *. A widow injured, ruined, undone, calls a meeting of

* Orat. 33.

of a few of her nearest friends and relations; and though never before accustomed, says the orator, to speak in the presence of men, the distress of her circumstances constrained her to lay the case before them. The very opening of her mouth in such company required, it seems, an apology.

When Demosthenes prosecuted his tutors, to make them refund his patrimony, it became necessary for him, in the course of the law-suit, to prove that the marriage of Aphobus's sister with Oneter was entirely fraudulent, and that, notwithstanding her sham marriage, she had lived with her brother at Athens for two years past, ever since her divorce from her former husband. And it is remarkable, that though these were people of the first fortune and distinction in the city, the orator could prove this fact no way, but by calling for her female slaves to be put to the question, and by the evidence of one physician, who had seen her in her brother's house during her illness *. So reserved were Greek manners.

We may be assured, that an extreme purity of manners was the consequence of this reserve. Accordingly we find, that, except the fabulous stories of an Helen and a Clytemnestra, there scarcely is an instance of any event in the Greek history, which proceeded from the intrigues of women. On the other hand, in modern times, particularly in a neighbouring nation, the females enter into all transactions and all management of church and state: And no man can expect success, who takes not care to obtain their good graces. Harry the third, by incurring the displeasure of the fair, endangered his crown, and lost his life, as much as by his indulgence to heresy.

It

* In Oneterem.

It is needlefs to diffemble: The confequence of a very free commerce between the fexes, and of their living much together, will often terminate in intrigues and gallantry. We muft facrifice fomewhat of the *ufeful*, if we be very anxious to obtain all the *agreeable* qualities; and cannot pretend to reach alike every kind of advantage. Inftances of licence, daily multiplying, will weaken the fcandal with the one fex, and teach the other by degrees, to adopt the famous maxim of La Fontaine, with regard to female infidelity, *that if one knows it, it is but a fmall matter; if one knows it not, it is nothing* *.

Some people are inclined to think, that the beft way of adjufting all differences, and of keeping the proper medium between the *agreeable* and the *ufeful* qualities of the fex, is to live with them after the manner of the Romans and the Englifh (for the cuftoms of thefe two nations feem fimilar in this refpect †); that is, without gallantry ‡, and without jealoufy. By a parity of reafon, the cuftoms of the Spaniards and of the Italians of an age ago (for the prefent are very different) muft be the worft of any; becaufe they favour both gallantry and jealoufy.

Nor will thefe different cuftoms of nations affect the one fex only: Their idea of perfonal merit in the males muft alfo be fomewhat different with regard, at leaft, to converfation, addrefs, and humour. The one nation, where the men live much apart, will naturally more approve of prudence; the other of gaiety. With the one fimplicity

* Quand on le fçait c'eft peu de chofe:
Quand on l'ignore, ce n'eft rien.

† See NOTE [XX].

‡ The gallantry here meant is that of amours and attachments, not that of complaifance, which is as much paid to the fair-fex in England as in any other country.

ſimplicity of manners will be in the higheſt eſteem; with the other, politeneſs. The one will diſtinguiſh themſelves by good-ſenſe and judgment; the other, by taſte and delicacy. The eloquence of the former will ſhine moſt in the ſenate; that of the other, on the theatre.

Theſe, I ſay, are the *natural* effects of ſuch cuſtoms. For it muſt be confeſſed, that chance has a great influence on national manners; and many events happen in ſociety, which are not to be accounted for by general rules. Who could imagine, for inſtance, that the Romans, who lived freely with their women, ſhould be very indifferent about muſic, and eſteem dancing infamous: While the Greeks, who never almoſt ſaw a woman but in their own houſes, were continually piping, ſinging, and dancing?

The differences of moral ſentiment, which naturally ariſe from a republican or monarchical government, are alſo very obvious; as well as thoſe which proceed from general riches or poverty, union or faction, ignorance or learning. I ſhall conclude this long diſcourſe with obſerving, that different cuſtoms and ſituations vary not the original ideas of merit (however they may, ſome conſequences) in any very eſſential point, and prevail chiefly with regard to young men, who can aſpire to the agreeable qualities, and may attempt to pleaſe. The Manner, the Ornaments, the Graces, which ſucceed in this ſhape, are more arbitrary and caſual: But the merit of riper years is almoſt every where the ſame; and conſiſts chiefly in integrity, humanity, ability, knowledge, and the other more ſolid and uſeful qualities of the human mind.

What you inſiſt on, replied Palamedes, may have ſome foundation, when you adhere to the maxims of common life and ordinary conduct.

Experience and the practice of the world readily correct any great extravagance on either ſide. But what ſay you to *artificial* lives and manners? How do you reconcile the maxims, on which, in different ages and nations, theſe are founded?

What do you underſtand by *artificial* lives and manners? ſaid I. I explain myſelf, replied he. You know, that religion had, in ancient times, very little influence on common life, and that, after men had performed their duty in ſacrifices and prayers at the temple, they thought, that the gods left the reſt of their conduct to themſelves, and were little pleaſed or offended with thoſe virtues or vices, which only affected the peace and happineſs of human ſociety. In thoſe ages, it was the buſineſs of philoſophy alone to regulate men's ordinary behaviour and deportment; and accordingly, we may obſerve, that this being the ſole principle, by which a man could elevate himſelf above his fellows, it acquired a mighty aſcendant over many, and produced great ſingularities of maxims and of conduct. At preſent, when philoſophy has loſt the allurement of novelty, it has no ſuch extenſive influence; but ſeems to confine itſelf moſtly to ſpeculations in the cloſet; in the ſame manner, as the ancient religion was limited to ſacrifices in the temple. Its place is now ſupplied by the modern religion, which inſpects our whole conduct, and preſcribes an univerſal rule to our actions, to our words, to our very thoughts and inclinations; a rule ſo much the more auſtere, as it is guarded by infinite, though diſtant, rewards and puniſhments; and no infraction of it can ever be concealed or diſguiſed.

Diogenes is the moſt celebrated model of extravagant philoſophy. Let us ſeek a parallel to him in modern times. We ſhall not diſgrace any philoſophic name by a compariſon with the Dominics or Loyolas, or any

any canonized monk or friar. Let us compare him to Pascal, a man of parts and genius as well as Diogenes himself; and perhaps too, a man of virtue, had he allowed his virtuous inclinations to have exerted and displayed themselves.

The foundation of Diogenes's conduct was an endeavour to render himself an independent being as much as possible, and to confine all his wants and desires and pleasures within himself and his own mind: The aim of Pascal was to keep a perpetual sense of his dependence before his eyes, and never to forget his numberless wants and infirmities. The ancient supported himself by magnanimity, ostentation, pride, and the idea of his own superiority above his fellow-creatures. The modern made constant profession of humility and abasement, of the contempt and hatred of himself; and endeavoured to attain these supposed virtues, as far as they are attainable. The austerities of the Greek were in order to inure himself to hardships, and prevent his ever suffering: Those of the Frenchman were embraced merely for their own sake, and in order to suffer as much as possible. The philosopher indulged himself in the most beastly pleasures, even in public: The saint refused himself the most innocent, even in private. The former thought it his duty to love his friends, and to rail at them, and reprove them, and scold them: The latter endeavoured to be absolutely indifferent towards his nearest relations, and to love and speak well of his enemies. The great object of Diogenes's wit was every kind of superstition, that is every kind of religion known in his time. The mortality of the soul was his standard principle; and even his sentiments of a divine providence seem to have been licentious. The most ridiculous superstitions directed Pascal's faith and practice; and an extreme contempt of this life, in compa-

comparifon of the future, was the chief foundation of his conduct.

In fuch a remarkable contraft do thefe two men ftand: Yet both of them have met with general admiration in their different ages, and have been propofed as models of imitation. Where then is the univerfal ftandard of morals, which you talk of? And what rule fhall we eftablifh for the many different, nay contrary fentiments of mankind?

An experiment, faid I, which fucceeds in the air, will not always fucceed in a vacuum. When men depart from the maxims of common reafon, and affect thefe *artificial* lives, as you call them, no one can anfwer for what will pleafe or difpleafe them. They are in a different element from the reft of mankind; and the natural principles of their mind play not with the fame regularity, as if left to themfelves, free from the illufions of religious fuperftition or philofophical enthufiafm.

THE

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

RELIGION.

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INTRODUCTION.

AS every enquiry, which regards religion, is of the utmoſt importance, there are two queſtions in particular, which challenge our attention, to wit, that concerning its foundation in reaſon, and that concerning its origin in human nature. Happily, the firſt queſtion, which is the moſt important, admits of the moſt obvious, at leaſt, the cleareſt ſolution. The whole frame of nature beſpeaks an intelligent author; and no rational enquirer can, after ſerious reflection, ſuſpend his belief a moment with regard to the primary principles of genuine Theiſm and Religion. But the other queſtion, concerning the origin of religion in human nature, is expoſed to ſome more difficulty. The belief of inviſible, intelligent power has been very generally diffuſed over the human race, in all places and in all ages; but it has

neither perhaps been ſo univerſal as to admit of no exception, nor has it been in any degree, uniform in the ideas, which it has ſuggeſted. Some nations have been diſcovered, who entertained no ſentiments of Religion, if travellers and hiſtorians may be credited; and no two nations, and ſcarce any two men, have ever agreed preciſely in the ſame ſentiments. It would appear, therefore, that this preconception ſprings not from an original inſtinct or primary impreſſion of nature, ſuch as gives riſe to ſelf-love, affection between the ſexes, love of progeny, gratitude, reſentment; ſince every inſtinct of this kind has been found abſolutely univerſal in all nations and ages, and has always a preciſe determinate object, which it inflexibly purſues. The firſt religious principles muſt be ſecondary; ſuch as may eaſily be perverted by various accidents and cauſes, and whoſe operation too, in ſome caſes, may, by an extraordinary concurrence of circumſtances, be altogether prevented. What thoſe principles are, which give riſe to the original belief, and what thoſe accidents and cauſes are, which direct its operation, is the ſubject of our preſent enquiry.

Sect. I. *That Polytheiſm was the primary Religion of Men.*

It appears to me, that, if we conſider the improvement of human ſociety, from rude beginnings to a ſtate of greater perfection, polytheiſm or idolatry was, and neceſſarily muſt have been, the firſt and moſt ancient religion of mankind. This opinion I ſhall endeavour to confirm by the following arguments.

It is a matter of fact inconteſtable, that about 1700 years ago all mankind were polytheiſts. The doubtful and ſceptical principles of a few philoſophers, or the theiſm, and that too not entirely

tirely pure, of one or two nations, form no objection worth regarding. Behold then the clear teſtimony of hiſtory. The farther we mount up into antiquity, the more do we find mankind plunged into polytheiſm. No marks, no ſymptoms of any more perfect religion. The moſt ancient records of human race ſtill preſent us with that ſyſtem as the popular and eſtabliſhed creed. The north, the ſouth, the eaſt, the weſt, give their unanimous teſtimony to the ſame fact. What can be oppoſed to ſo full an evidence?

As far as writing or hiſtory reaches, mankind, in ancient times, appear univerſally to have been polytheiſts. Shall we aſſert, that, in more ancient times, before the knowledge of letters, or the diſcovery of any art or ſcience, men entertained the principles of pure theiſm? That is, while they were ignorant and barbarous, they diſcovered truth: But fell into error, as ſoon as they acquired learning and politeneſs.

But in this aſſertion you not only contradict all appearance of probability, but alſo our preſent experience concerning the principles and opinions of barbarous nations. The ſavage tribes of America, Africa, and Aſia are all idolaters. Not a ſingle exception to this rule. Inſomuch, that, were a traveller to tranſport himſelf into any unknown region; if he found inhabitants cultivated with arts and ſcience, though even upon that ſuppoſition there are odds againſt their being theiſts, yet could he not ſafely, till farther inquiry, pronounce any thing on that head: But if he found them ignorant and barbarous, he might beforehand declare them idolaters; and there ſcarcely is a poſſibility of his being miſtaken.

It ſeems certain, that, according to the natural progreſs of human thought, the ignorant multitude muſt firſt entertain ſome groveling and familiar no-

tion of ſuperior powers, before they ſtretch their conception to that perfect Being, who beſtowed order on the whole frame of nature. We may as reaſonably imagine, that men inhabited palaces before huts and cottages, or ſtudied geometry before agriculture; as aſſert that the Deity appeared to them a pure ſpirit, omniſcient, omnipotent, and omnipreſent, before he was apprehended to be a powerful, though limited being, with human paſſions and appetites, limbs and organs. The mind riſes gradually, from inferior to ſuperior: By abſtracting from what is imperfect, it forms an idea of perfection: And ſlowly diſtinguiſhing the nobler parts of its own frame from the groſſer, it learns to transfer only the former, much elevated and refined, to its divinity. Nothing could diſturb this natural progreſs of thought, but ſome obvious and invincible argument, which might immediately lead the mind into the pure principles of theiſm, and make it overleap, at one bound, the vaſt interval which is interpoſed between the human and the divine nature. But though I allow, that the order and frame of the univerſe, when accurately examined, affords ſuch an argument; yet I can never think, that this conſideration could have an influence on mankind, when they formed their firſt rude notions of religion.

The cauſes of ſuch objects, as are quite familiar to us, never ſtrike our attention or curioſity; and however extraordinary or ſurpriſing theſe objects in themſelves, they are paſſed over, by the raw and ignorant multitude, without much examination, or enquiry. Adam, riſing at once, in paradiſe, and in the full perfection of his faculties, would naturally, as repreſented by Milton, be aſtoniſhed at the glorious appearances of nature, the heavens, the air, the earth, his own organs and members; and would be led to aſk, whence this wonderful ſcene aroſe. But a barbarous, neceſſitous animal (ſuch as

a man

a man is on the firſt origin of ſociety), preſſed by ſuch numerous wants and paſſions, has no leiſure to admire the regular face of nature, to make enquiries concerning the cauſe of thoſe objects, to which from his infancy he has been gradually accuſtomed. On the contrary, the more regular and uniform, that is, the more perfect nature appears, the more is he familiarized to it, and the leſs inclined to ſcrutinize and examine it. A monſtrous birth excites his curioſity, and is deemed a prodigy. It alarms him from its novelty; and immediately ſets him a trembling, and ſacrificing, and praying. But an animal, compleat in all its limbs and organs, is to him an ordinary ſpectacle, and produces no religious opinion or affection. Aſk him, whence that animal aroſe; he will tell you, from the copulation of its parents. And theſe, whence? From the copulation of theirs. A few removes ſatisfy his curioſity, and ſet the object at ſuch a diſtance, that he entirely loſes ſight of them. Imagine not, that he will ſo much as ſtart the queſtion, whence the firſt animal; much leſs, whence the whole ſyſtem or united fabric of the univerſe aroſe. Or, if you ſtart ſuch a queſtion to him, expect not, that he will employ his mind with any anxiety about a ſubject, ſo remote, ſo unintereſting, and which ſo much exceeds the bounds of his capacity.

But farther, if men were at firſt led into the belief of one Supreme Being, by reaſoning from the frame of nature, they could never poſſibly leave that belief, in order to embrace polytheiſm; but the ſame principles of reaſon, which at firſt produced and diffuſed over mankind, ſo magnificent an opinion, muſt be able, with greater facility, to preſerve it. The firſt invention and proof of any doctrine is much more difficult than the ſupporting and retaining of it.

There

There is a great difference between hiſtorical facts and ſpeculative opinions; nor is the knowledge of the one propagated in the ſame manner with that of the other. An hiſtorical fact, while it paſſes by oral tradition from eye-witneſſes and contemporaries, is diſguiſed in every ſucceſſive narration, and may at laſt retain but very ſmall, if any, reſemblance of the original truth, on which it was founded. The frail memories of men, their love of exaggeration, their ſupine careleſſneſs; theſe principles, if not corrected by books and writing, ſoon pervert the account of hiſtorical events; where argument or reaſoning has little or no place, nor can ever recal the truth, which has once eſcaped thoſe narrations. It is thus the fables of Hercules, Theſeus, Bacchus are ſuppoſed to have been originally founded in true hiſtory, corrupted by tradition. But with regard to ſpeculative opinions, the caſe is far otherwiſe. If theſe opinions be founded on arguments ſo clear and obvious as to carry conviction with the generality of mankind, the ſame arguments, which at firſt diffuſed the opinions, will ſtill preſerve them in their original purity. If the arguments be more abſtruſe, and more remote from vulgar apprehenſion, the opinions will always be confined to a few perſons; and as ſoon as men leave the contemplation of the arguments, the opinions will immediately be loſt and buried in oblivion. Whichever ſide of this dilemma we take, it muſt appear impoſſible, that theiſm could, from reaſoning, have been the primary religion of human race, and afterwards, by its corruption, given birth to polytheiſm and to all the various ſuperſtitions of the heathen world. Reaſon, when obvious, prevents theſe corruptions: When abſtruſe, it keeps the principles entirely from the knowledge of the vulgar, who are alone liable to corrupt any principle or opinion.

SECT.

SECT. II. *Origin of Polytheiſm.*

If we would, therefore, indulge our curioſity, in enquiring concerning the origin of religion, we muſt turn our thoughts towards polytheiſm, the primitive religion of uninſtructed mankind.

Were men led into the apprehenſion of inviſible, intelligent power by a contemplation of the works of nature, they could never poſſibly entertain any conception but of one ſingle being, who beſtowed exiſtence and order on this vaſt machine, and adjuſted all its parts, according to one regular plan or connected ſyſtem. For though, to perſons of a certain turn of mind, it may not appear altogether abſurd, that ſeveral independent beings, endowed with ſuperior wiſdom, might conſpire in the contrivance and execution of one regular plan; yet is this a merely arbitrary ſuppoſition, which, even if allowed poſſible, muſt be confeſſed neither to be ſupported by probability nor neceſſity. All things in the univerſe are evidently of a piece. Every thing is adjuſted to every thing. One deſign prevails throughout the whole. And this uniformity leads the mind to acknowledge one author; becauſe the conception of different authors, without any diſtinction of attributes or operations, ſerves only to give perplexity to the imagination, without beſtowing any ſatisfaction on the underſtanding. The ſtatue of Laocoon, as we learn from Pliny, was the work of three artiſts: But it is certain, that, were we not told ſo, we ſhould never have imagined, that a groupe of figures, cut from one ſtone, and united in one plan, was not the work and contrivance of one ſtatuary. To aſcribe any ſingle effect to the combination of ſeveral cauſes, is not ſurely a natural and obvious ſuppoſition.

On

On the other hand, if, leaving the works of nature, we trace the footsteps of invisible power in the various and contrary events of human life, we are necessarily led into polytheism and to the acknowledgment of several limited and imperfect deities. Storms and tempests ruin what is nourished by the sun. The sun destroys what is fostered by the moisture of dews and rains. War may be favourable to a nation, whom the inclemency of the seasons afflicts with famine. Sickness and pestilence may depopulate a kingdom, amidst the most profuse plenty. The same nation is not, at the same time, equally successful by sea and by land. And a nation, which now triumphs over its enemies, may anon submit to their more prosperous arms. In short, the conduct of events, or what we call the plan of a particular providence, is so full of variety and uncertainty, that, if we suppose it immediately ordered by any intelligent beings, we must acknowledge a contrariety in their designs and intentions, a constant combat of opposite powers, and a repentance or change of intention in the same power, from impotence or levity. Each nation has its tutelar deity. Each element is subjected to its invisible power or agent. The province of each god is separate from that of another. Nor are the operations of the same god always certain and invariable. To-day he protects: To-morrow he abandons us. Prayers and sacrifices, rites and ceremonies, well or ill performed, are the sources of his favour or enmity, and produce all the good or ill fortune, which are to be found amongst mankind.

We may conclude, therefore, that, in all nations, which have embraced polytheism, the first ideas of religion arose not from a contemplation of the works of nature, but from a concern with regard to the events of life, and from the incessant hopes and fears, which actuate the human mind.

mind. Accordingly, we find, that all idolaters, having ſeparated the provinces of their deities, have recourſe to that inviſible agent, to whoſe authority they are immediately ſubjected, and whoſe province it is to ſuperintend that courſe of actions, in which they are, at any time, engaged. Juno is invoked at marriages; Lucina at births. Neptune receives the prayers of ſeamen; and Mars of warriors. The huſbandman cultivates his field under the protection of Ceres; and the merchant acknowledges the authority of Mercury. Each natural event is ſuppoſed to be governed by ſome intelligent agent; and nothing proſperous or adverſe can happen in life, which may not be the ſubject of peculiar prayers or thankſgivings *.

It muſt neceſſarily, indeed, be allowed, that, in order to carry men's attention beyond the preſent courſe of things, or lead them into any inference concerning inviſible intelligent power, they muſt be actuated by ſome paſſion, which prompts their thought and reflection; ſome motive, which urges their firſt enquiry. But what paſſion ſhall we here have recourſe to, for explaining an effect of ſuch mighty conſequence? Not ſpeculative curioſity ſurely, or the pure love of truth. That motive is too refined for ſuch groſs apprehenſions; and would lead men into enquiries concerning the frame of nature, a ſubject too large and comprehenſive for their narrow capacities. No paſſions, therefore, can be ſuppoſed to work upon ſuch barbarians, but the ordinary affections of human life; the anxious concern for happineſs, the dread of future miſery, the terror of death, the thirſt of revenge, the appetite for food and other neceſſaries. Agitated by hopes and fears of this nature, eſpecially the latter, men ſcrutinize, with a trembling curioſity,

* See NOTE [YY].

curiosity, the course of future causes, and examine the various and contrary events of human life. And in this disordered scene, with eyes still more disordered and astonished, they see the first obscure traces of divinity.

SECT. III. *The same subject continued.*

We are placed in this world, as in a great theatre, where the true springs and causes of every event are entirely concealed from us; nor have we either sufficient wisdom to foresee, or power to prevent those ills, with which we are continually threatened. We hang in perpetual suspence between life and death, health and sickness, plenty and want; which are distributed amongst the human species by secret and unknown causes, whose operation is oft unexpected, and always unaccountable. These *unknown causes*, then, become the constant object of our hope and fear; and while the passions are kept in perpetual alarm by an anxious expectation of the events, the imagination is equally employed in forming ideas of those powers, on which we have so entire a dependance. Could men anatomize nature, according to the most probable, at least the most intelligible philosophy, they would find, that these causes are nothing but the particular fabric and structure of the minute parts of their own bodies and of external objects: and that, by a regular and constant machinery, all the events are produced, about which they are so much concerned. But this philosophy exceeds the comprehension of the ignorant multitude, who can only conceive the *unknown causes* in a general and confused manner; though their imagination, perpetually employed on the same subject, must labour to form some particular and distinct idea of them. The

more

more they conſider theſe cauſes themſelves, and the uncertainty of their operation, the leſs ſatisfaction do they meet with in their reſearches; and, however unwilling, they muſt at laſt have abandoned ſo arduous an attempt, were it not for a propenſity in human nature, which leads into a ſyſtem, that gives them ſome ſatisfaction.

There is an univerſal tendency among mankind to conceive all beings like themſelves, and to tranſfer to every object, thoſe qualities, with which they are familiarly acquainted, and of which they are intimately conſcious. We find human faces in the moon, armies in the clouds; and by a natural propenſity, if not corrected by experience and reflection, aſcribe malice or good-will to every thing, that hurts or pleaſes us. Hence the frequency and beauty of the *proſopopœia* in poetry; where trees, mountains and ſtreams are perſonified, and the inanimate parts of nature acquire ſentiment and paſſion. And though theſe poetical figures and expreſſions gain not on the belief, they may ſerve, at leaſt, to prove a certain tendency in the imagination, without which they could neither be beautiful nor natural. Nor is a river-god or hamadryad always taken for a mere poetical or imaginary perſonage; but may ſometimes enter into the real creed of the ignorant vulgar; while each grove or field is repreſented as poſſeſſed of a particular *genius* or inviſible power, which inhabits and protects it. Nay, philoſophers cannot entirely exempt themſelves from this natural frailty; but have oft aſcribed to inanimate matter the horror of a *vacuum*, ſympathies, antipathies, and other affections of human nature. The abſurdity is not leſs, while we caſt our eyes upwards; and transferring, as is too uſual, human paſſions and infirmities to the deity, repreſent him as jealous and revengeful, capricious and partial, and, in ſhort, a wicked and fooliſh man, in every reſpect but his

ſuperior

ſuperior power and authority. No wonder, then, that mankind, being placed in ſuch an abſolute ignorance of cauſes, and being at the ſame time ſo anxious concerning their future fortune, ſhould immediately acknowledge a dependence on inviſible powers, poſſeſſed of ſentiment and intelligence. The *unknown cauſes*, which continually employ their thought, appearing always in the ſame aſpect, are all apprehended to be of the ſame kind or ſpecies. Nor is it long before we aſcribe to them thought and reaſon and paſſion, and ſometimes even the limbs and figures of men, in order to bring them nearer to a reſemblance with ourſelves.

In proportion as any man's courſe of life is governed by accident, we always find, that he encreaſes in ſuperſtition; as may particularly be obſerved of gameſters and ſailors, who, though, of all mankind, the leaſt capable of ſerious reflection, abound moſt in frivolous and ſuperſtitious apprehenſions. The gods, ſays Coriolanus in Dionyſius *, have an influence in every affair; but above all, in war; where the event is ſo uncertain. All human life, eſpecially before the inſtitution of order and good government, being ſubject to fortuitous accidents; it is natural, that ſuperſtition ſhould prevail every where in barbarous ages, and put men on the moſt earneſt enquiry concerning thoſe inviſible powers, who diſpoſe of their happineſs or miſery. Ignorant of aſtronomy and the anatomy of plants and animals, and too little curious to obſerve the admirable adjuſtment of final cauſes; they remain ſtill unacquainted with a firſt and ſupreme creator, and with that infinitely and perfect ſpirit, who alone, by his almighty will, beſtowed order on the whole frame of nature. Such a magnificent idea is too big for their narrow conceptions, which,

* Lib. viii.

which can neither obſerve the beauty of the work, nor comprehend the grandeur of its author. They ſuppoſe their deities, however potent and inviſible, to be nothing but a ſpecies of human creatures, perhaps raiſed from among mankind, and retaining all human paſſions and appetites, together with corporeal limbs and organs. Such limited beings, though maſters of human fate, being, each of them, incapable of extending his influence every where, muſt be vaſtly multiplied, in order to anſwer that variety of events, which happen over the whole face of nature. Thus every place is ſtored with a crowd of local deities; and thus polytheiſm has prevailed, and ſtill prevails, among the greateſt part of uninſtructed mankind *.

Any of the human affections may lead us into the notion of inviſible, intelligent power; hope as well as fear, gratitude as well as affliction: But if we examine our own hearts, or obſerve what paſſes around us, we ſhall find, that men are much oftener thrown on their knees by the melancholy than by the agreeable paſſions. Proſperity is eaſily received as our due, and few queſtions are aſked concerning its cauſe or author. It begets cheerfulneſs and activity and alacrity and a lively enjoyment of every ſocial and ſenſual pleaſure: And during this ſtate of mind, men have little leiſure

* The following lines of Euripides are ſo much to the preſent purpoſe, that I cannot forbear quoting them:

Ουκ εστιν ουδεν πιστον, ουτ᾽ ευδοξια,
Ουτ᾽ αν καλως πρασσοντα μη πραξειν κακως.
Φυρουσι δ᾽ αυτ᾽ οι θεοι παλιν τε και προσω,
Ταραγμον εντιθεντες, ως αγνωσια
Σεβωμεν αυτους. HECUBA.

"There is nothing ſecure in the world; no glory, no proſ-"perity. The gods toſs all life into confuſion; mix every "thing with its reverſe; that all of us, from our ignorance and "uncertainty, may pay them the more worſhip and reverence."

leisure or inclination to think of the unknown invisible regions. On the other hand, every disastrous accident alarms us, and sets us on enquiries concerning the principles whence it arose: Apprehensions spring up with regard to futurity: And the mind, sunk into diffidence, terror, and melancholy, has recourse to every method of appeasing those secret intelligent powers, on whom our fortune is supposed entirely to depend.

No topic is more usual with all popular divines than to display the advantages of affliction, in bringing men to a due sense of religion; by subduing their confidence and sensuality, which, in times of prosperity, make them forgetful of a divine providence. Nor is this topic confined merely to modern religions. The ancients have also employed it. *Fortune has never liberally, without envy*, says a Greek historian *, *bestowed an unmixed happiness on mankind*; *but with all her gifts has ever conjoined some disastrous circumstance, in order to chastize men into a reverence for the gods, whom, in a continued course of prosperity, they are apt to neglect and forget.*

What age or period of life is the most addicted to superstition? The weakest and most timid. What sex? The same answer must be given. *The leaders and examples of every kind of superstition*, says Strabo †, *are the women. These excite the men to devotion and supplications, and the observance of religious days. It is rare to meet with one that lives apart from the females, and yet is addicted to such practices. And nothing can, for this reason, be more improbable, than the account given of an order of men among the* Getes, *who practised celibacy, and were notwithstanding the most religious fanatics.* A method of reasoning, which would lead us to entertain a bad idea of the devotion of monks; did

* Diod. Sic. lib. iii. † Lib. vii.

did we not know by an experience, not ſo common, perhaps, in Strabo's days, that one may practiſe celibacy, and profeſs chaſtity; and yet maintain the cloſeſt connexions and moſt entire ſympathy with that timorous and pious ſex.

SECT. IV. *Deities not conſidered as creators or formers of the world.*

The only point of theology, in which we ſhall find a conſent of mankind almoſt univerſal, is, that there is inviſible, intelligent power in the world: But whether this power be ſupreme or ſubordinate, whether confined to one being, or diſtributed among ſeveral, what attributes, qualities, connexions, or principles of action ought to be aſcribed to thoſe beings; concerning all theſe points, there is the wideſt difference in the popular ſyſtems of theology. Our anceſtors in Europe, before the revival of letters, believed, as we do at preſent, that there was one ſupreme God, the author of nature, whoſe power, though in itſelf uncontroulable, was yet often exerted by the interpoſition of his angels and ſubordinate miniſters, who executed his ſacred purpoſes. But they alſo believed, that all nature was full of other inviſible powers; fairies, goblins, elves, ſprights; beings, ſtronger and mightier than men, but much inferior to the celeſtial natures, who ſurround the throne of God. Now, ſuppoſe, that any one, in thoſe ages, had denied the exiſtence of God and of his angels; would not his impiety juſtly have deſerved the appellation of atheiſm, even though he had ſtill allowed, by ſome odd capricious reaſoning, that the popular ſtories of elves and fairies were juſt and well grounded? The difference, on the one hand, between ſuch a perſon and a genuine theiſt is infinitely greater

greater than that, on the other, between him and one that absolutely excludes all invisible intelligent power. And it is a fallacy, merely from the casual resemblance of names, without any conformity of meaning, to rank such opposite opinions under the same denomination.

To any one, who considers justly of the matter, it will appear, that the gods of all polytheists are no better than the elves or fairies of our ancestors, and merit as little any pious worship or veneration. These pretended religionists are really a kind of superstitious atheists, and acknowledge no being, that corresponds to our idea of a deity. No first principle of mind or thought: No supreme government and administration: No divine contrivance or intention in the fabric of the world.

The Chinese, when * their prayers are not answered, beat their idols. The deities of the Laplanders are any large stone which they meet with of an extraordinary shape †. The Egyptian mythologists, in order to account for animal worship, said, that the gods, pursued by the violence of earth-born men, who were their enemies, had formerly been obliged to disguise themselves under the semblance of beasts ‡. The Caunii, a nation in the lesser Asia, resolving to admit no strange gods among them, regularly, at certain seasons, assembled themselves compleatly armed, beat the air with their lances, and proceeded in that manner to their frontiers; in order, as they said, to expel the foreign deities ||. *Not even the immortal gods*, said some German nations to Cæsar, *are a match for the* Suevi §.

Many

* Peter le Compte. † Regnard, Voiage de Laponie.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. i. Lucian, de Sacrificiis. Ovid alludes to the same tradition, Metam. lib. v. l. 321. So also Manilius, lib. iv. || Herodot. lib. i.

§ Cæs. Comment. de bello Gallico, lib. iv.

Many ills, ſays Dione in Homer to Venus wounded by Diomede, many ills, my daughter, have the gods inflicted on men: And many ills, in return, have men inflicted on the gods *. We need but open any claſſic author to meet with theſe groſs repreſentations of the deities; and Longinus † with reaſon obſerves, that ſuch ideas of the divine nature, if literally taken, contain a true atheiſm.

Some writers ‡ have been ſurprized, that the impieties of Ariſtophanes ſhould have been tolerated, nay publicly acted and applauded by the Athenians; a people ſo ſuperſtitious and ſo jealous of the public religion, that, at that very time, they put Socrates to death for his imagined incredulity. But theſe writers do not conſider, that the ludicrous, familiar images, under which the gods are repreſented by that comic poet, inſtead of appearing impious, were the genuine lights in which the ancients conceived their divinities. What conduct can be more criminal or mean, than that of Jupiter in the Amphitrion? Yet that play, which repreſented his gallant exploits, was ſuppoſed ſo agreeable to him, that it was always acted in Rome by public authority, when the ſtate was threatened with peſtilence, famine, or any general calamity ‖. The Romans ſuppoſed, that, like all old letchers, he would be highly pleaſed with the recital of his former feats of proweſs and vigour, and that no topic was ſo proper, upon which to flatter his vanity.

The Lacedemonians, ſays Xenophon §, always, during war, put up their petitions very early in the morning, in order to be beforehand with their enemies, and, being the firſt ſolicitors, pre-engage

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* Lib. ix. 382. † Cap. ix.
‡ Pere Brumoy, Theatre des Grecs; & Fontenelle, Hiſtoire des Oracles. ‖ Arnob. lib. vii. § De Laced. Rep.

the gods in their favour. We may gather from Seneca*, that it was uſual, for the votaries in the temples, to make intereſt with the beadle or ſexton, that they might have a ſeat near the image of the deity, in order to be the beſt heard in their prayers and applications to him. The Tyrians, when beſieged by Alexander, threw chains on the ſtatue of Hercules, to prevent that deity from deſerting to the enemy †. Auguſtus, having twice loſt his fleet by ſtorms, forbad Neptune to be carried in proceſſion along with the other gods; and fancied, that he had ſufficiently revenged himſelf by that expedient ‡. After Germanicus's death, the people were ſo enraged at their gods, that they ſtoned them in their temples; and openly renounced all allegiance to them ‖.

To aſcribe the origin and fabric of the univerſe to theſe imperfect beings never enters into the imagination of any polytheiſt or idolater. Heſiod, whoſe writings, with thoſe of Homer, contained the canonical ſyſtem of the heathens §; Heſiod, I ſay, ſuppoſes gods and men to have ſprung equally from the unknown powers of nature †. And throughout the whole theogony of that author, Pandora is the only inſtance of creation or a voluntary production; and ſhe too was formed by the gods merely from deſpite to Prometheus, who had furniſhed men with ſtolen fire from the ceſtial regions ††. The ancient mythologiſts, indeed, ſeem throughout to have rather embraced the idea of generation than that of creation

* Epiſt. xii.

† Quint. Curtius, lib. iv. cap. 3. Diod. Sic. lib. xvii.

‡ Suet. in vita Aug. cap. 16 ‖ Id. in vita Cal. cap. 5.

§ Herodot. lib. ii. Lucian. *Jupiter confutatus, de luctu, Saturn.* &c.

Ως ομοθεν γεγαασι θεοι θνητοι τ' ανθρωποι. Heſ. Opera & Dies, l. 108.

†† Theog. l. 570.

tion or formation; and to have thence accounted for the origin of this univerſe.

Ovid, who lived in a learned age, and had been inſtructed by philoſophers in the principles of a divine creation or formation of the world; finding, that ſuch an idea would not agree with the popular mythology, which he delivers, leaves it, in a manner, looſe and detatched from his ſyſtem. *Quiſquis fuit ille Deorum**? Whichever of the gods it was, ſays he, that diſſipated the chaos and introduced order into the univerſe. It could neither be Saturn, he knew, nor Jupiter, nor Neptune, nor any of the received deities of paganiſm. His theological ſyſtem had taught him nothing upon that head; and he leaves the matter equally undetermined.

Diodorus Siculus †, beginning his work with an enumeration of the moſt reaſonable opinions concerning the origin of the world, makes no mention of a deity or intelligent mind; though it is evident from his hiſtory, that he was much more prone to ſuperſtition than to irreligion. And in another paſſage ‡, talking of the Ichthyophagi, a nation in India, he ſays, that, there being ſo great difficulty in accounting for their deſcent we muſt conclude them to be *aborigines*, without any beginning of their generation, propagating their race from all eternity; as ſome of the phyſiologers, in treating of the origin of nature, have juſtly obſerved. "But in ſuch ſub-"jects as theſe," adds the hiſtorian, "which "exceed all human capacity, it may well hap-"pen, that thoſe, who diſcourſe the moſt, know "the leaſt; reaching a ſpecious appearance of "truth in their reaſonings, while extremely wide "of the real truth and matter of fact."

 A ſtrange

* Metamorph. lib. i. l. 32. † Lib. i. ‡ Id. ibid.

A ſtrange ſentiment in our eyes, to be embraced by a profeſſed and zealous religioniſt *! But it was merely by accident, that the queſtion concerning the origin of the world did ever in ancient times enter into religious ſyſtems, or was treated of by theologers. The philoſophers alone made profeſſion of delivering ſyſtems of this kind; and it was pretty late too before theſe bethought themſelves of having recourſe to a mind or ſupreme intelligence, as the firſt cauſe of all. So far was it from being eſteemed profane in thoſe days to account for the origin of things without a deity, that Thales, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, and others, who embraced that ſyſtem of coſmogony, paſt unqueſtioned; while Anaxagoras, the firſt undoubted theiſt among the philoſophers, was perhaps the firſt that ever was accuſed to atheiſm †.

We are told by Sextus Empiricus ‡, that Epicurus, when a boy, reading with his preceptor theſe verſes of Heſiod.

> Eldeſt of beings, *chaos* firſt aroſe;
> Next *earth*, wide-ſtretch'd, the *ſeat* of all:

the young ſcholar firſt betrayed his inquiſitive genius, by aſking, *And chaos whence?* But was told by his preceptor, that he muſt have recourſe to the philoſophers for a ſolution of ſuch queſtions. And from this hint Epicurus left philology and all other ſtudies, in order to betake himſelf to that ſcience, whence alone he expect-

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* The ſame author, who can thus account for the origin of the world without a Deity, eſteems it impious to explain from phyſical cauſes, the common accidents of life, earthquakes, inundations, and tempeſts: and devoutly aſcribes theſe to the anger of Jupiter or Neptune. A plain proof, whence he derived his ideas of religion. See lib. xv. p. 364. Ex. edit. Rhodomani.

† See NOTE [ZZ].

‡ Adverſus Mathem. lib. ix.

ed ſatisfaction with regard to theſe ſublime ſubjects.

The common people were never likely to puſh their reſearches ſo far, or derive from reaſoning their ſyſtems of religion; when philologers and mythologiſts, we ſee, ſcarcely ever diſcovered ſo much penetration. And even the philoſophers, who diſcourſed of ſuch topics, readily aſſented to the groſſeſt theory, and admitted the joint origin of gods and men from night and chaos; from fire, water, air, or whatever they eſtabliſhed to be the ruling element.

Nor was it only on their firſt origin, that the gods were ſuppoſed dependent on the powers of nature. Throughout the whole period of their exiſtence they were ſubjected to the dominion of fate or deſtiny. *Think of force of neceſſity*, ſays Agrippa to the Roman people, *that force, to which even the gods muſt ſubmit* *. And the Younger Pliny †, agreeable to this way of thinking, tells us, that amidſt the darkneſs, horror, and confuſion, which enſued upon the firſt eruption of Veſuvius, ſeveral concluded, that all nature was going to wrack, and that gods and men were periſhing in one common ruin.

It is great complaiſance, indeed, if we dignify with the name of religion ſuch an imperfect ſyſtem of theology, and put it on a level with latter ſyſtems, which are founded on principles more juſt and more ſublime. For my part, I can ſcarcely allow the principles even of Marcus Aurelius, Plutarch, and ſome other *Stoics* and *Academics*, though much more refined than the pagan ſuperſtition, to be worthy of the honourable appellation of theiſm. For if the mythology of the heathens reſemble the ancient European ſyſtem of ſpiritual beings, excluding God and

* Dionyſ. Halic. lib. vi.

† Epiſt. lib. vi.

and angels, and leaving only fairies and ſprights; the creed of theſe philoſopers may juſtly be ſaid to exclude a deity, and to leave only angels and fairies.

Sect. V. *Various Forms of Polytheiſm :Allegory Hero-Worſhip.*

But it is chiefly our preſent buſineſs to conſider the groſs polytheiſm of the vulgar, and to trace all its various appearances, in the principles of human nature, whence they are derived. Whoever learns by argument, the exiſtence of inviſible intelligent power, muſt reaſon from the admirable contrivance of natural objects, and muſt ſuppoſe the world to be the workmanſhip of that divine being, the original cauſe of all things. But the vulgar polytheiſt, ſo far from admitting that idea, deifies every part of the univerſe, and conceives all the conſpicuous productions of nature, to be themſelves ſo many real divinities. The ſun, moon, and ſtars, are all gods according to his ſyſtem: Fountains are inhabited by nymphs, and trees by hamadryads: Even monkies, dogs, cats, and other animals often become ſacred in his eyes, and ſtrike him with a religious veneration. And thus, however ſtrong men's propenſity to believe inviſible, intelligent power in nature, their propenſity is equally ſtrong to reſt their attention on ſenſible, viſible objects; and in order to reconcile theſe oppoſite inclinations, they are led to unite the inviſible power with ſome viſible object.

The diſtribution alſo of diſtinct provinces to the ſeveral deities is apt to cauſe ſome allegory, both phyſical and moral, to enter into the vulgar ſyſtems of polytheiſm. The god of war will naturally

naturally be repreſented as furious, cruel, and impetuous: The god of poetry as elegant, polite, and amiable: The god of merchandiſe, eſpecially in early times, as thieviſh and dreadful. The allegories, ſuppoſed in Homer and other mythologiſts, I allow, have often been ſo ſtrained, that men of ſenſe are apt entirely to reject them, and to conſider them as the production merely of the fancy and conceit of critics and commentators. But that allegory really has place in the heathen mythology is undeniable even on the leaſt reflection. Cupid the ſon of Venus; the Muſes the daughters of Memory; Prometheus, the wiſe brother, and Epimetheus the fooliſh; Hygieia or the goddeſs of health deſcended from Æſculapius or the god of phyſic: Who ſees not, in theſe, and in many other inſtances, the plain traces of allegory? When a god is ſuppoſed to preſide over any paſſion, event, or ſyſtem of actions, it is almoſt unavoidable to give him a genealogy, attributes, and adventures, ſuitable to his ſuppoſed powers and influence; and to carry on that ſimilitude and compariſon, which is naturally ſo agreeable to the mind of man.

Allegories, indeed, entirely perfect, we ought not to expect as the productions of ignorance and ſuperſtition; there being no work of genius that requires a nicer hand, or has been more rarely executed with ſucceſs. That *Fear* and *Terror* are the ſons of Mars is juſt; but why by Venus*? That *Harmony* is the daughter of Venus is regular; but why by Mars†? That *Sleep* is the brother of *Death* is ſuitable; but why deſcribe him as enamoured of the Graces‡? And ſince the ancient mythologiſts fall into miſtakes ſo groſs and palpable, we have no reaſon ſurely to expect ſuch refined and long-ſpun allegories, as

* Heſiod. Theog. l. 935.

† Id. ibid. & Pluto. in vita Pelop.

‡ Iliad. xiv. 267.

as ſome have endeavoured to reduce from their actions.

Lucretius was plainly ſeduced by the ſtrong appearance of allegory, which is obſervable in the pagan fictions. He firſt addreſſes himſelf to Venus as to that generating power, which animates, renews, and beautifies the univerſe: But is ſoon betrayed by the mythology into incoherencies, while he prays to that allegorical perſonage to appeaſe the furies of her lover Mars: An idea not drawn from allegory, but from the popular religion, and which Lucretius, as an Epicurean, could not conſiſtently admit of.

The deities of the vulgar are ſo little ſuperior to human creatures, that, where men are affected with ſtrong ſentiments of veneration or gratitude for any hero or public benefactor, nothing can be more natural than to convert him into a god, and fill the heavens, after this manner, with continual recruits from among mankind. Moſt of the divinities of the ancient world are ſuppoſed to have once been men, to have been beholden for their *apotheoſis* to the admiration and affection of the people. The real hiſtory of their adventures, corrupted by tradition, and elevated by the marvellous, became a plentiful ſource of fable; eſpecially in paſſing through the hands of poets, allegoriſts, and prieſts, who ſucceſſively improved upon the wonder and aſtoniſhment of the ignorant multitude.

Painters too and ſculptors came in for their ſhare of profit in the ſacred myſteries; and furniſhing men with ſenſible repreſentations of their divinities, whom they cloathed in human figures, gave great encreaſe to the public devotion, and determined its object. It was probably for want of theſe arts in rude and barbarous ages, that men deified plants, animals, and even brute, unorganized

ganized matter; and rather than be without a ſenſible object of worſhip, affixed divinity to ſuch ungainly forms. Could any ſtatuary of Syria, in early times, have formed a juſt figure of Apollo, the conic ſtone, Heliogabalus, had never become the object of ſuch profound adoration, and been received as a repreſentation of the ſolar deity *.

Stilpo, was baniſhed by the council of Areopagus, for affirming that the Minerva in the citadel was no divinity; but the workmanſhip of Phidias, the ſculptor †. What degree of reaſon muſt we expect in the religious belief of the vulgar in other nations; when Athenians and Areopagites could entertain ſuch groſs conceptions?

Theſe then are the general principles of polytheiſm, founded in human nature, and little or nothing dependent on caprice and accident. As the *cauſes*, which beſtow happineſs or miſery, are, in general, very little known and very uncertain our anxious concern endeavours to attain a determinate idea of them; and finds no better expedient than to repreſent them as intelligent voluntary agents, like ourſelves; only ſomewhat ſuperior in power and wiſdom. The limited influence of theſe agents, and their great proximity to human weakneſs, introduce the various diſtribution and diviſion of their authority; and thereby give riſe to allegory. The ſame principles naturally deify mortals, ſuperior in power, courage, or underſtanding, and produce hero-worſhip; together with fabulous hiſtory and mythological tradition, in all its wild and unaccountable forms. And

* Herodian, lib. v. Jupiter Ammon is repreſented by Curtius as a deity of the ſame kind, lib. iv. cap. 7. The Arabians and Perſinuntians adored alſo ſhapeleſs unformed ſtones as their deity. Arnob. lib. vi. So much did their folly exceed that of the Egyptians.

† Diod. Laert. lib. ii.

And as an invisible spiritual intelligence is an object too refined for vulgar apprehension, men naturally affix it to some sensible representation; such as either the more conspicuous parts of nature, or the statues, images, and pictures, which a more refined age forms of its divinities.

Almost all idolaters, of whatever age or country, concur in these general principles and conceptions; and even the particular characters and provinces, which they assign to their deities, are not extremely different *. The Greek and Roman travellers and conquerors, without much difficulty, found their own deities every where; and said, This is Mercury, that Venus; this Mars, that Neptune; by whatever title the strange gods might not be denominated. The goddess Hertha of our Saxon ancestors seems to be no other, according to Tacitus †, than the *Mater Tellus* of the Romans; and his conjecture was evidently just.

SECT. VI. *Origin of Theism from Polytheism.*

The doctrine of one supreme deity, the author of nature, is very ancient, has spread itself over great and populous nations, and among them has been embraced by all ranks and conditions of men: But whoever thinks that it has owed its success to the prevalent force of those invincible reasons, on which it is undoubtedly founded, would show himself little acquainted with the ignorance and stupidity of the people, and their incurable prejudices in favour of their particular superstitions. Even at this day, and in Europe, ask any of the vulgar, why he believes in an omnipotent creator of the world; he will never mention

* See Cæsar of the religion of the Gauls, De bello Gallico, lib. xi. † De moribus Germ.

mention the beauty of final caufes, of which he is wholly ignorant: He will not hold out his hand, and bid you contemplate the fupplenefs and variiety of joints in his fingers, their bending all one way, the counterpoife which they receive from the thumb, the foftnefs and flefhy parts of the infide of his hand, with all the other circumftances, which render that member fit for the ufe, to which it was deftined. To thefe he has been long accuftomed: and he beholds them with liftleffnefs and unconcern. He will tell you of the fudden and unexpected death of fuch a one: The fall and bruife of fuch another: The exceffive drought of this feafon: The cold and rains of another. Thefe he afcribes to the immediate operation of providence: And fuch events, as, with good reafoners, are the chief difficulties in admitting a fupreme intelligence, are with him the fole arguments for it.

Many theifts, even the moft zealous and refined, have denied a *particular* providence, and have afferted, that the Sovereign mind or firft principle of all things, having fixed general laws, by which nature is governed, gives free and uninterrupted courfe to thefe laws, and difturbs not, at every turn, the fettled order of events by particular volitions. From the beautiful connexion, fay they, and rigid obfervance of eftablifhed rules, we draw the chief argument for theifm; and from the fame principles are enabled to anfwer the principal objections againft it. But fo little is this underftood by the generality of mankind, that, wherever they obferve any one to afcribe all events to natural caufes, and to remove the particular interpofition of a deity, they are apt to fufpect him of the groffeft infidelity. *A little philofophy*, fays lord Bacon, *makes men atheifts: A great deal reconciles them to religion*. For men, being taught, by fuperftitious prejudices, to lay the

the ſtreſs on a wrong place: when that fails them, and they diſcover, by a little reflection, that the courſe of nature is regular and uniform, their whole faith totters, and falls to ruin. But being taught, by more reflection, that this very regularity and uniformity is the ſtrongeſt proof of deſign and of a ſupreme intelligence, they return to that belief, which they had deſerted; and they are now able to eſtabliſh it on a firmer and more durable foundation.

Convulſions in nature, diſorders, prodigies, miracles, though the moſt oppoſite to the plan of a wiſe ſuperintendent, impreſs mankind with the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of religion; the cauſes of events ſeeming then the moſt unknown and unaccountable. Madneſs, fury, rage, and an inflamed imagination, though they ſink men neareſt to the level of beaſts, are, for a like reaſon, often ſuppoſed to be the only diſpoſitions, in which we can have any immediate communication with the Deity.

We may conclude, therefore, upon the whole, that, ſince the vulgar, in nations, which have embraced the doctrine of theiſm, ſtill build it upon irrational and ſuperſtitious principles, they are never led into that opinion by any proceſs of argument, but by a certain train of thinking, more ſuitable to their genius and capacity.

It may readily happen, in an idolatrous nation, though men admit the exiſtence of ſeveral limited deities, yet is there ſome one God, whom, in a particular manner, they make the object of their worſhip and adoration. They may either ſuppoſe, that, in the diſtribution of power and territory among the gods, their nation was ſubjected to the juriſdiction of that particular deity; or reducing heavenly objects to the model of things below, they may repreſent one god as the prince or ſupreme magiſtrate of the reſt; who,

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though of the ſame nature, rules them with an authority, like that which an earthly ſovereign exerciſes over his ſubjects and vaſſals. Whether this god, therefore, be conſidered as their peculiar patron, or as the general ſovereign of heaven, his votaries will endeavour, by every art, to inſinuate themſelves into his favour; and ſuppoſing him to be pleaſed, like themſelves, with praiſe and flattery, there is no eulogy or exaggeration, which will be ſpared in their addreſſes to him. In proportion as men's fears or diſtreſſes become more urgent, they ſtill invent new ſtrains of adulation; and even he who outdoes his predeceſſor in ſwelling up the titles of his divinity, is ſure to be outdone by his ſucceſſor in newer and more pompous epithets of praiſe. Thus they proceed; till at laſt they arrive at infinity itſelf, beyond which there is no farther progreſs: And it is well, if, in ſtriving to get farther, and to repreſent a magnificent ſimplicity, they run not into inexplicable myſtery, and deſtroy the intelligent nature of their deity, on which alone any rational worſhip or adoration can be founded. While they confine themſelves to the notion of a perfect being, the creator of the world, they coincide, by chance, with the principles of reaſon and true philoſophy; though they are guided to that notion, not by reaſon, of which they are in a great meaſure incapable, but by the adulation and fears of the moſt vulgar ſuperſtition.

We often find, amongſt barbarous nations, and even ſometimes amongſt civilized, that, when every ſtrain of flattery has been exhauſted towards arbitrary princes, when every human quality has been applauded to the utmoſt; their ſervile courtiers repreſent them, at laſt, as real divinities, and point them out to the people as objects of adoration. How much more natural, therefore, is it, that a limited deity, who at firſt is ſuppoſed only

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the immediate author of the particular goods and ills in life, ſhould in the end be repreſented as ſovereign maker and modifier of the univerſe?

Even where this notion of a ſupreme deity is already eſtabliſhed; though it ought naturally to leſſen every other worſhip, and abaſe every object of reverence, yet if a nation has entertained the opinion of a ſubordinate tutelar divinity, ſaint, or angel; their addreſſes to that being gradually riſe upon them, and encroach on the adoration due to their ſupreme deity. The Virgin *Mary*, ere checked by the reformation, had proceeded, from being merely a good woman, to uſurp many attributes of the Almighty: God and St. Nicholas go hand in hand, in all the prayers and petitions of the Muſcovites.

Thus the deity, who, from love, converted himſelf into a bull, in order to carry off Europa; and who, from ambition, dethroned his father, Saturn, became the Optimus Maximus of the heathens. Thus, the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, became the ſupreme deity or Jehovah of the Jews.

The Jacobins, who deny the immaculate conception, have ever been very unhappy in their doctrine, even though political reaſons have kept the Romiſh church from condemning it. The Cordeliers have run away with all the popularity. But in the fifteenth century, as we learn from Boulainvilliers *, an Italian *Cordelier* maintained, that, during the three days, when Chriſt was interred, the hypoſtatic union was diſſolved, and that his human nature was not a proper object of adoration, during that period. Without the art of divination, one might foretel, that ſo groſs and impious a blaſphemy would not fail to be anathematized

* Hiſtoire abregée, p. 499.

tized by the people. It was the occaſion of great inſults on the part of the Jacobins; who now got ſome recompence for their misfortunes in the war about the imaculate conception.

Rather than relinquiſh this propenſity to adulation, religioniſts, in all ages, have involved themſelves in the greateſt abſurdities and contradictions.

Homer, in one paſſage, calls Oceanus and Tethys the original parents of all things, conformably to the eſtabliſhed mythology and tradition of the Greeks: Yet, in other paſſages, he could not forbear complimenting Jupiter, the reigning deity, with that magnificent appellation; and accordingly denominates him the father of gods and men. He forgets, that every temple, every ſtreet was full of the anceſtors, uncles, brothers, and ſiſters of this Jupiter; who was in reality nothing but an upſtart parricide and uſurper. A like contradiction is obſervable in Heſiod; and is ſo much the leſs excuſeable, as his profeſſed intention was to deliver a true genealogy of the gods.

Were there a religion (and we may ſuſpect Mahometaniſm of this inconſiſtence) which ſometimes painted the Deity in the moſt ſublime colours, as the creator of heaven and earth; ſometimes degraded him nearly to a level with human creatures in his powers and faculties; while at the ſame time it aſcribed to him ſuitable infirmities, paſſions, and partialities, of the moral kind: That religion, after it was extinct, would alſo be cited as an inſtance of thoſe contradictions, which ariſe from the groſs, vulgar, natural conceptions of mankind, oppoſed to their continual propenſity towards flattery and exaggeration. Nothing indeed would prove more ſtrongly the divine origin of any religion, than to find (and happily this is the caſe with Chriſtianity) that it is free from a contradiction, ſo incident to human nature.

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Sect. VII. *Confirmation of this Doctrine.*

It appears certain, that, though the original notions of the vulgar represent the Divinity as a limited being, and consider him only as the particular cause of health or sickness; plenty or want; prosperity or adversity; yet when more magnificent ideas are urged upon them, they esteem it dangerous to refuse their assent. Will you say, that your deity is finite and bounded in his perfections; may be overcome by a greater force; is subject to human passions, pains, and infirmties; has a beginning, and may have an end? This they dare not affirm; but thinking it safest to comply with the higher encomiums, they endeavour, by an affected ravishment and devotion, to ingratiate themselves with him. As a confirmation of this, we may observe, that the assent of the vulgar is, in this case, merely verbal, and that they are incapable of conceiving those sublime qualities, which they seemingly attribute to the Deity. Their real idea of him, notwithstanding their pompous language, is still as poor and frivolous as ever.

That original intelligence, say the Magians, who is the first principle of all things, discovers himself *immediately* to the mind and understanding alone; but has placed the sun as his image in the visible universe; and when that bright luminary diffuses its beams over the earth and the firmament, it is a faint copy of the glory, which resides in the higher heavens. If you would escape the displeasure of this divine being, you must be careful never to set your bare foot upon the ground, nor spit into a fire, nor throw any water upon it, even though it were consuming a whole city *. Who can express the perfections of the Almighty? say the Mahometans.

* Hyde de Relig. veterum Persarum.

hometans. Even the nobleſt of his works, if compared to him, are but duſt and rubbiſh. How much more muſt human conception fall ſhort of his infinite perfections? His ſmile and favour renders men for ever happy: and to obtain it for your children, the beſt method is to cut off from them, while infants, a little bit of ſkin, about half the breadth of a farthing. Take two bits of cloth †, ſay the *Roman Catholics*, about an inch or an inch and a half ſquare, join them by the corners with two ſtrings or pieces of tape about ſixteen inches long, throw this over your head, and make one of the bits of cloth lie upon your breaſt, and the other upon your back, keeping them next your ſkin: There is not a better ſecret for recommending yourſelf to that infinite Being, who exiſts from eternity to eternity.

The Getes, commonly called immortal, from their ſteady belief of the ſoul's immortality, were genuine theiſts and unitarians. They affirmed Zamolxis, their deity, to be the only true god; and aſſerted the worſhip of all other nations to be addreſſed to mere fictions and chimeras. But were their religious principles any more refined, on account of theſe magnificent pretenſions? Every fifth year they ſacrificed a human victim, whom they ſent as a meſſenger to their deity, in order to inform him of their wants and neceſſities. And when it thundered, they were ſo provoked, that, in order to return the defiance, they let fly arrows at him, and declined not the combat as unequal. Such at leaſt is the account, which Herodotus gives of the theiſm of the immortal Getes ‡.

† Called the Scapulaire. ‡ Lib.iv.

SECT. VIII. *Flux and reflux of polytheiſm and theiſm.*

It is remarkable, that the principles of religion have a kind of flux and reflux in the human mind, and that men have a natural tendency to riſe from idolatry to theiſm, and to ſink again from theiſm into idolatry. The vulgar, that is, indeed, all mankind, a few excepted, being ignorant and uninſtructed, never elevate their contemplation to the heavens, or penetrate by their diſquiſitions into the ſecret ſtructure of vegetable or animal bodies; ſo far as to diſcover a ſupreme mind or original providence, which beſtowed order on every part of nature. They conſider theſe admirable works in a more confined and ſelfiſh view; and finding their own happineſs and miſery to depend on the ſecret influence and unforeſeen concurrence of external objects, they regard, with perpetual attention, the *unknown cauſes*, which govern all theſe natural events, and diſtribute pleaſure and pain, good and ill, by their powerful, but ſilent, operation. The unknown cauſes are ſtill appealed to on every emergence; and in this general appearance or confuſed image, are the perpetual objects of human hopes and fears, wiſhes and apprehenſions. By degrees, the active imagination of men, uneaſy in this abſtract conception of objects, about which it is inceſſantly employed, begins to render them more particular, and to clothe them in ſhapes more ſuitable to its natural comprehenſion. It repreſents them to be ſenſible, intelligent beings, like mankind; actuated by love and hatred, and flexible by gifts and entreaties, by prayers and ſacrifices. Hence the origin of religion: And hence the origin of idolatry or polytheiſm.

But the ſame anxious concern for happineſs, which begets the idea of theſe inviſible, intelligent powers,

powers, allows not mankind to remain long in the firſt ſimple conception of them; as powerful, but limited beings; maſters of human fate, but ſlaves to deſtiny and the courſe of nature. Men's exaggerated praiſes and compliments ſtill ſwell their idea upon them; and elevating their deities to the utmoſt bounds of perfection, at laſt beget the attributes of unity and infinity, ſimplicity and ſpirituality. Such refined ideas, being ſomewhat diſproportioned to vulgar comprehenſion, remain not long in their original purity; but require to be ſupported by the notion of inferioı mediators or ſubordinate agents, which interpoſe between mankind and their ſupreme deity. Theſe demigods or middle beings, partaking more of human nature, and being more familiar to us, become the chief objects of devotion, and gradually recal that idolatry, which had been formerly baniſhed by the ardent prayers and panegyrics of timorous and indigent mortals. But as theſe idolatrous religions fall every day into groſſer and more vulgar conceptions, they at laſt deſtroy themſelves, and, by the vile repreſentations, which they form of their deities, make the tide turn again towards theiſm. But ſo great is the propenſity, in this alternate revolution of human ſentiments, to return back to idolatry, that the utmoſt precaution is not able effectually to prevent it. And of this, ſome theiſts, particularly the Jews and Mahometans, have been ſenſible; as appears by their baniſhing all the arts of ſtatuary and painting, and not allowing the repreſentations, even of human figures, to be taken by marble or colours; leſt the common infirmity of mankind ſhould thence produce idolatry. The feeble apprehenſions of men cannot be ſatisfied with conceiving their deity as a pure ſpirit and perfect intelligence; and yet their natural terrors keep them from imputing to him the leaſt ſhadow of limitation and imperfection. They fluctuate between theſe

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oppoſite ſentiments. The ſame infirmity ſtill drags them downwards, from an omnipotent and ſpiritual deity, to a limited and corporeal one, and from a corporeal and limited deity to a ſtatue or viſible repreſentation. The ſame endeavour at elevation ſtill puſhes them upwards, from the ſtatue or material image to the inviſible power; and from the inviſible power to an infinitely perfect deity, the creator and ſovereign of the univerſe.

SECT. IX. *Compariſon of theſe Religions, with regard to Perſecution and Toleration.*

Polytheiſm or idolatrous worſhip, being founded entirely in vulgar traditions, is liable to this great inconvenience, that any practice or opinion, however barbarous or corrupted, may be authorized by it; and full ſcope is given, for knavery to impoſe on credulity, till morals and humanity be expelled the religious ſyſtem of mankind. At the ſame time, idolatry is attended with this evident advantage, that, by limiting the powers and functions of its deities, it naturally admits the gods of other ſects and nations to a ſhare of divinity, and renders all the various deities, as well as rites, ceremonies, or traditions, compatible with each other *. Theiſm is oppoſite both in its advantages and diſadvantages. As that ſyſtem ſuppoſes one ſole deity, the perfection of reaſon and goodneſs, it ſhould, if juſtly proſecuted, baniſh every thing frivolous, unreaſonable, or inhuman from religious worſhip, and ſet before men the moſt illuſtrious example, as well as the moſt commanding motives, of juſtice and benevolence. Theſe mighty advantages are not indeed over-balanced (for that is not poſſible), but ſomewhat diminiſhed,

* See NOTE [AAA].

diminiſhed, by inconveniencies, which ariſe from the vices and prejudices of mankind. While one ſole object of devotion is acknowledged, the worſhip of other deities is regarded as abſurd and impious. Nay, this unity of object ſeems naturally to require the unity of faith and ceremonies, and furniſhes deſigning men with a pretence for repreſenting their adverſaries as profane, and the objects of divine as well as human vengeance. For as each ſect is poſitive that its own faith and worſhip are entirely acceptable to the deity, and as no one can conceive, that the ſame being ſhould be pleaſed with different and oppoſite rites and principles; the ſeveral ſects fall naturally into animoſity, and mutually diſcharge on each other that ſacred zeal and rancour, the moſt furious and implacable of all human paſſions.

The tolerating ſpirit of idolaters, both in ancient and modern times, is very obvious to any one, who is the leaſt converſant in the writings of hiſtorians or travellers. When the oracle of Delphi was aſked, what rites or worſhip was moſt acceptable to the gods? Thoſe which are legally eſtabliſhed in each city, replied the oracle *. Even prieſts in thoſe ages, could, it ſeems, allow ſalvation to thoſe of a different communion. The Romans commonly adopted the Gods of the conquered people; and never diſputed the attributes of thoſe local and national deities, in whoſe territories they reſided. The religious wars and perſecutions of the Egyptian idolaters are indeed an exception to this rule; but are accounted for by ancient authors from reaſons ſingular and remarkable. Different ſpecies of animals were the deities of the different ſects among the Egyptians; and the deities being in continual war, engaged

* Xenoph. Memor. lib. ii.

engaged their votaries in the ſame contention. The worſhippers of dogs could not long remain in peace with the adorers of cats or wolves *. But where that reaſon took not place, the Egyptian ſuperſtition was not ſo incompatible as is commonly imagined; ſince we learn from Herodotus †, that very large contributions were given by Amaſis towards rebuilding the temple of Delphi.

The intolerance of almoſt all religions, which have maintained the unity of God, is as remarkable as the contrary principle of polytheiſts. The implacable narrow ſpirit of the Jews is well known. Mahometaniſm ſet out with ſtill more bloody principles; and even to this day, deals out damnation, though not fire and faggot, to all other ſects. And if, among Chriſtians, the Engliſh and Dutch have embraced the principles of toleration, this ſingularity has proceeded from the ſteady reſolution of the civil magiſtrate, in oppoſition to the continued efforts of prieſts and bigots.

The diſciples of Zoroaſter ſhut the doors of heaven againſt all but the Magians ‡. Nothing could more obſtruct the progreſs of the Perſian conqueſts, than the furious zeal of that nation againſt the temples and images of the Greeks. And after the overthrow of that empire we find Alexander, as a polytheiſt, immediately re-eſtabliſhing the worſhip of the Babylonians, which their former princes, as monotheiſts, had carefully aboliſhed ‖. Even the blind and devoted attachment of that conqueror to the Greek ſuperſtition hindered not but he himſelf ſacrificed according to the Babyloniſh ceremonies. §.

So

* Plutarch. de Iſid. & Oſiride.

† Lib. ii. ſub fine.

‡ Hyde de Relig. vet. Perſarum.

‖ Arrian. de Exped. lib. iii. Id. lib. vii.

§ Id. ibid.

So ſociable is polytheiſm, that the utmoſt fierceneſs and antipathy, which it meets within an oppoſite religion, is ſcarcely able to diſguſt it, and keep it at a diſtance. Auguſtus praiſed extremely the reſerve of his grandſon, Caius Cæſar, when this latter prince, paſſing by Jeruſalem, deigned not to ſacrifice according to the Jewiſh law. But for what reaſon did Auguſtus ſo much approve of this conduct? Only, becauſe that religion was by the Pagans eſteemed ignoble and barbarous*.

I may venture to affirm, that few corruptions of idolatry and polytheiſm are more pernicious to ſociety than this corruption of theiſm †, when carried to the utmoſt height. The human ſacrifices of the Carthaginians, Mexicans, and many barbarous nations ‡, ſcarcely exceed the inquiſition and perſecutions of Rome and Madrid. For beſides, that the effuſion of blood may not be ſo great in the former caſe as in the latter; beſides this, I ſay, the human victims, being choſen by lot,, or by ſome exterior ſigns, affect not, in ſo conſiderable a degree, the reſt of the ſociety. Whereas virtue, knowledge, love of liberty, are the qualities, which call down the fatal vengeance of inquiſitors; and when expelled, leave the ſociety in the moſt ſhameful ignorance, corruption, and bondage. The illegal murder of one man by a tyrant is more pernicious than the death of a thouſand by peſtilence, famine, or any undiſtinguiſhing calamity.

In the temple of Diana at Aricia near Rome, whoever murdered the preſent prieſt, was legally entitled to be inſtalled his ſucceſſor ‖. A very ſingular inſtitution! For, however

* Sueton. in vita Aug. c. 93. † *Corruptio optimi peſſima.*
‡ See NOTE [BBB].
‖ Strabo, lib. v. Sueton. in vita Cal.

ever barbarous and bloody the common superstitions often are to the laity, they usually turn to the advantage of the holy order.

Sect. X. *With regard to courage or abasement*

From the comparison of theism and idolatry, we may form some other observations, which will also confirm the vulgar observation, that the corruption of the best things gives rise to the worst.

Where the deity is represented as infinitely superior to mankind, this belief, though altogether just, is apt, when joined with superstitious terrors, to sink the human mind in the lowest submission and abasement, and to represent the monkish virtues of mortification, pennace, humility, and passive suffering, as the only qualities which are acceptable to him. But where the gods are conceived to be only a little superior to mankind, and to have been, many of them, advanced from that inferior rank, we are more at our ease in our addresses to them, and may even, without profaneness, aspire sometimes to a rivalship and emulation of them. Hence activity, spirit, courage, magnanimity, love of liberty, and all the virtues which aggrandize a people.

The heroes in paganism correspond exactly to the saints in popery and holy dervises in Mahometanism. The place of Hercules, Theseus, Hector, Romulus, is now supplied by Dominic, Francis, Anthony, and Benedict. Instead of the destruction of monsters, the subduing of tyrants, the defence of our native country; whippings and fastings, cowardice and humility, abject submission and slavish obedience, are become the means of obtaining celestial honours among mankind.

One

One great incitement to the pious Alexander in his warlike expeditions was his rivalſhip of Hercules and Bacchus, whom he juſtly pretended to have excelled *. Braſidas, that generous and noble Spartan, after falling in battle, had heroic honour paid him by the inhabitants of Amphipolis, whoſe defence he had embraced †. And in general, all founders of ſtates and colonies among the Greeks were raiſed to this inferior rank of divinity, by thoſe who reaped the benefit of their labours.

This gave riſe to the obſervation of Machiavel ‡, that the doctrines of the Chriſtian religion (meaning the catholic; for he knew no other) which recommend only paſſive courage and ſuffering, had ſubdued the ſpirit of mankind, and had fitted them for ſlavery and ſubjection. An obſervation, which would certainly be juſt, were there not many other circumſtances in human ſociety which controul the genuis and character of a religion.

Braſidas ſeized a mouſe, and being bit by it, let it go. *There is nothing ſo contemptible*, ſaid he, *but what may be ſafe, if it has but courage to defend itſelf* ‖. Bellarmine patiently and humbly allowed the fleas and other odious vermin to prey upon him. *We ſhall have heaven*, ſaid he, *to reward us for our ſufferings: But theſe poor creatures have nothing but the enjoyment of the preſent life* §. Such difference is there between the maxims of a Greek hero and a Catholic ſaint.

SECT. XI. *With regard to reaſon or abſurdity.*

Here is another obſervation to the ſame purpoſe, and a new proof that the corruption of the beſt things

* Arrian paſſim. † Thucyd. lib. v. ‡ Diſcorſi, lib. vi.
‖ Plut. Apopth. § Bayle, Article Bellarmine.

things begets the worſt. If we examine, without prejudice, the ancient heathen mythology, as contained in the poets, we ſhall not diſcover in it any ſuch monſtrous abſurdity, as we may at firſt be apt to apprehend. Where is the difficulty in conceiving, that the ſame powers or principles, whatever they were, which formed this viſible world, men and animals, produced alſo a ſpecies of intelligent creatures, of more refined ſubſtance and greater authority than the reſt? That theſe creatures may be capricious, revengeful, paſſionate, voluptuous, is eaſily conceived; nor is any circumſtance more apt, among ourſelves, to engender ſuch vices, than the licence of abſolute authority. And in ſhort, the whole mythological ſyſtem is ſo natural, that, in the variety of planets and worlds, contained in this univerſe, it ſeems more than probable, that, ſomewhere or other, it is really carried into execution.

The chief objection to it with regard to this planet, is, that it is not aſcertained by any juſt reaſon or authority. The ancient tradition, inſiſted on by heathen prieſts and theologers, is but a weak foundation; and tranſmitted alſo ſuch a number of contradictory reports, ſupported, all of them, by equal authority, that it became abſolutely impoſſible to fix a preference amongſt them. A few volumes, therefore, muſt contain all the polemical writings of pagan prieſts: And their whole theology muſt conſiſt more of traditional ſtories and ſuperſtitious practices than of philoſophical argument and controverſy.

But where theiſm forms the fundamental principle of any popular religion, that tenet is ſo conformable to ſound reaſon, that philoſophy is apt to incorporate itſelf with ſuch a ſyſtem of theology. And if the other dogmas of that ſyſtem be contained in a ſacred book, ſuch as the Alcoran, or

be

be determined by any viſible authority, like that of the Roman pontiff, ſpeculative reaſoners naturally carry on their aſſent, and embrace a theory, which has been inſtilled into them by their earlieſt education, and which alſo poſſeſſes ſome degree of conſiſtence and uniformity. But as theſe appearances are ſure, all of them, to prove deceitful, philoſophy will ſoon find herſelf very unequally yoked with her new aſſociate; and inſtead of regulating each principle, as they advance together, ſhe is at every turn perverted to ſerve the purpoſes of ſuperſtition. For beſides the unavoidable incoherences, which muſt be reconciled and adjuſted; one may ſafely affirm, that all popular theology, eſpecially the ſcholaſtic, has a kind of appetite for abſurdity and contradiction. If that theology went not beyond reaſon and common ſenſe, her doctrines would appear too eaſy and familiar. Amazement muſt of neceſſity be raiſed: Myſtery affected: Darkneſs and obſcurity ſought after: And a foundation of merit afforded to the devout votaries, who deſire an opportunity of ſubduing their rebellious reaſon, by the belief of the moſt unintelligible ſophiſms.

Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory ſufficiently confirms theſe reflections. When a controverſy is ſtarted, ſome people always pretend with certainty to foretell the iſſue. Whichever opinion, ſay they, is moſt contrary to plain ſenſe is ſure to prevail; even where the general intereſt of the ſyſtem requires not that deciſion. Though the reproach of hereſy may, for ſome time, be bandied about among the diſputants, it always reſts at laſt on the ſide of reaſon. Any one, it is pretended, that has but learning enough of this kind to know the definition of Arian, Pelagian, Eraſtian, Socinian, Sabellian, Eutychian, Neſtorian, Monothelite, &c. not to mention Proteſtant, whoſe fate is yet un-

certain,

certain, will be convinced of this obſervation. It is thus a ſyſtem becomes more abſurd in the end, merely from its being reaſonable and philoſophical in the beginning.

To oppoſe the torrent of ſcholaſtic religion by ſuch feeble maxims as theſe, that *it is impoſſible for the ſame thing, to be and not to be*, that *the whole is greater than a part*, that *two and three make five*; is pretending to ſtop the ocean with a bull-ruſh. Will you ſet up profane reaſon againſt ſacred myſtery? No puniſhment is great enough for your impiety. And the ſame fires, which were kindled for heretics, will ſerve alſo for the deſtruction of philoſophers.

Sect. XII. *With regard to Doubt or Conviction.*

We meet every day with people ſo ſceptical with regard to hiſtory, that they aſſert it impoſſible for any nation ever to believe ſuch abſurd principles as thoſe of Greek and Egyptian paganiſm; and at the ſame time ſo dogmatical with regard to religion, that they think the ſame abſurdities are to be found in no other communion. Cambyſes entertained like prejudices; and very impiouſly ridiculed, and even wounded, Apis, the great god of the Egyptians, who appeared to his profane ſenſes nothing but a large ſpotted bull. But Herodotus judiciouſly aſcribes this ſally of paſſion to a real madneſs or diſorder of the brain: Otherwiſe, ſays the hiſtorian, he never would have openly affronted any eſtabliſhed worſhip. For on that head, continues he, every nation are beſt ſatisfied with their own, and think they have the advantage over every other nation.

It muſt be allowed, that the Roman Catholics are a very learned ſect; and that no one communion, but that of the church of England, can diſpute

diſpute their being the moſt learned of all the Chriſtian churches: Yet Averroes, the famous Arabian, who, no doubt, had heard of the Egyptian ſuperſtition, declares, that, of all religions, the moſt abſurd and nonſenſical is that, whoſe votaries eat, after having created, their deity.

I believe, indeed, that there is no tenet in all paganiſm, which would give ſo fair a ſcope to ridicule as this of the *real preſence*: For it is ſo abſurd, that it eludes the force of all argument. There are even ſome pleaſant ſtories of that kind, which, though ſomewhat profane, are commonly told by the Catholics themſelves. One day, a prieſt, it is ſaid, gave inadvertently, inſtead of the ſacrament, a counter, which had by accident fallen among the holy wafers. The communicant waited patiently for ſome time, expecting it would diſſolve on his tongue: But finding that it ſtill remained entire, he took it off. *I wiſh*, cried he to the prieſt, *you have not committed ſome miſtake: I wiſh you have not given me God the Father: He is ſo hard and tough there is no ſwallowing him.*

A famous general, at that time in the Muſcovite ſervice, having come to Paris for the recovery of his wound, brought along with him a young Turk, whom he had taken priſoner. Some of the doctors of the Sorbonne (who are altogether as poſitive as the dervifes of Conſtantinople) thinking it a pity, that the poor Turk ſhould be damned for want of inſtruction, ſolicited Muſtapha very hard to turn Chriſtian, and promiſed him, for his encouragement, plenty of good wine in this world; and paradiſe in the next. Theſe allurements were too powerful to be reſiſted; and therefore, having been well inſtructed and catechized, he at laſt agreed to receive the ſacraments of baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper. The

prieſt,

prieſt, however, to make every thing ſure and ſolid, ſtill continued his inſtructions; and began the next day with the uſual queſtion, *How many Gods are there? None at all!* replies Benedict; for that was his new name. *How! None at all!* cries the prieſt. *To be ſure*, ſaid the honeſt proſelyte. *You have told me all along that there is but one God: And yeſterday I eat him.*

Such are the doctrines of our brethren the Catholics. But to theſe doctrines we are ſo accuſtomed, that we never wonder at them: Though in a futureage, it will probably become difficult to perſuade ſome nations, that any human, two-legged creature could ever embrace ſuch principles. And it is a thouſand to one, but theſe nations themſelves ſhall have ſomething full as abſurd in their own creed. to which they will give a moſt implicit and moſt religious aſſent.

I lodged once at Paris in the ſame *hotel* with an ambaſſador from Tunis, who, having paſſed ſome years at London, was returning home that way. One day I obſerved his Mooriſh excellency diverting himſelf under the porch, with ſurveying the ſplendid equipages that drove along; when there chanced to paſs that way ſome *Capucin* friars, who had never ſeen a Turk; as he, on his part, though accuſtomed to the European dreſſes, had never ſeen the groteſque figure of a *Capucin*: And there is no expreſſing the mutual admiration, with which they inſpired each other. Had the chaplain of the embaſſy entered into a diſpute with theſe Franciſcans, their reciprocal ſurprize had been of the ſame nature. Thus all mankind ſtand ſtaring at one another; and there is no beating it into their heads, that the turban of the African is not juſt as good or as bad a faſhion as the cowl of the European. *He is a very*

honeſt

honest man, said the prince of Sallee, speaking of de Ruyter, *It is a pity he were a Christian.*

How can you worship leeks and onions? we shall suppose a Sorbonnist to say to a priest of Sais. If we worship them, replies the latter; at least, we do not, at the same time, eat them. But what strange objects of adoration are cats and monkies? says the learned doctor. They are at least as good as the relics or rotten bones of martyrs, answers his no less learned antagonist. Are you not mad, insists the Catholic, to cut one another's throat about the preference of a cabbage or a cucumber? Yes, says the pagan; I allow it, if you will confess, that those are still madder, who fight about the preference among volumes of sophistry, ten thousand of which are not equal in value to one cabbage or cucumber *.

Every by-stander will easily judge (but unfortunately the by-standers are few) that, if nothing were requisite to establish any popular system, but exposing the absurdities of other systems, every votary of every superstition could give a sufficient reason for his blind and bigotted attachment to the principles in which he has been educated. But without so extensive a knowledge, on which to ground this assurance (and perhaps, better without it), there is not wanting a sufficient stock of religious zeal and faith among mankind. Diodorus Siculus † gives a remarkable instance to this purpose, of which he was himself an eye-witness. While Egypt lay under the greatest terror of the Roman name, a legionary soldier having inadvertently been guilty of the sacrilegious impiety of killing a cat, the whole people rose upon him with the utmost fury: and all the efforts of the prince were not able to save him. The senate and peo-ple

* See NOTE [CCC].

† Lib. i.

ple of Rome, I am perſuaded, would not, then, have been ſo delicate with regard to their national deities. They very frankly, a little after that time, voted Auguſtus a place in the celeſtial manſions; and would have dethroned every god in heaven, for his ſake, had he ſeemed to deſire it. *Preſens divus habebitur* Auguſtus, ſays Horace. That is a very important point: And in other nations and other ages, the ſame circumſtance has not been deemed altogether indifferent *.

Notwithſtanding the ſanctity of our holy religion, ſays Tully †, no crime is more common with us than ſacrilege: But was it ever heard of, that an Egyptian violated the temple of a cat, an ibis, or a crocodile? There is no torture, an Egyptian would not undergo, ſays the ſame author in another place ‡, rather than injure an ibis, an aſpic, a cat, a dog, or a crocodile. Thus it is ſtrictly true, what Dryden obſerves,

"Of whatſoe'er deſcent their godhead be,
"Stock, ſtone, or other homely pedigree,
"In his defence his ſervants are as bold,
"As if he had been born of beaten gold."

ABSALOM and ACHITOPHEL.

Nay, the baſer the materials are, of which the divinity is compoſed, the greater devotion is he likely to excite in the breaſts of his deluded votaries. They exult in their ſhame, and make a merit with their deity, in braving, for his ſake, all the ridicule and contumely of his enemies,

* When Louis the XIVth took on himſelf the protection of the Jeſuits' College of Clermont, the ſociety ordered the king's arms to be put up over the gate, and took down the croſs, in order to make way for it: Which gave occaſion to the following epigram:

Suſtulit hinc Chriſti, poſuitque inſignia Regis:
Impia gens, alium neſcit habere Deum.

† De nat. Deor. l. i. ‖ Tuſc. Queſt. lib. v.

mies. Ten thouſand Cruſaders inliſt themſeves under the holy banners; and even openly triumph in thoſe parts of religion, which their adverſaries regard as the moſt reproachful.

There occurs, I own, a difficulty in the Egyptian ſyſtem of theology; as indeed, few ſyſtem of that kind are entirely free from difficulties. It is evident, from their method of propagation, that a couple of cats, in fifty years, would ſtock a whole kingdom; and if that religious veneration were ſtill paid them, it would, in twenty more, not only be eaſier in Egypt to find a god than a man, which Petronius ſays was in ſome parts of Italy; but the gods muſt at laſt entirely ſtarve the men, and leave themſelves neither prieſts nor votaries remaining. It is probable, therefore, that this wiſe nation, the moſt celebrated in antiquity for prudence and ſound policy, foreſeeing ſuch dangerous conſequences, reſerved all their worſhip for the full-grown divinities, and uſed the freedom to drown the holy ſpawn or little ſucking gods, without any ſcruple or remorſe. And thus the practice of warping the tenets of religion, in order to ſerve temporal intereſts, is not, by any means, to be regarded as an invention of theſe later ages.

The learned, philoſophical Varro, diſcourſing of religion, pretends not to deliver any thing beyond probabilities and appearances: Such was his good ſenſe and moderation! But the paſſionate, the zealous Auguſtin, inſults the noble Roman on his ſcepticiſm and reſerve, and profeſſes the moſt thorough belief and aſſurance*. A heathen poet, however, contemporary with the ſaint, abſurdly eſteems the religious ſyſtem of the latter ſo falſe, that even the credulity of

* De civitate Dei, l. iii. e. 17.

of children, he ſays, could not engage them to believe it †.

Is it ſtrange, when miſtakes are ſo common, to find every one poſitive and dogmatical? And that the zeal often riſes in proportion to the error? *Moverunt*, ſays Spartian, *& ea tempeſtate, Judæi bellum quod vetabantur mutilare genitalia* ‡.

If ever there was a nation or a time, in which the public religion loſt all authority over mankind, we might expect, that infidelity in Rome, during the Ciceronian age, would openly have erected its throne, and that Cicero himſelf, in every ſpeech and action, would have been its moſt declared abettor. But it appears, that, whatever ſceptical liberties that great man might take, in his writings or in philoſophical converſation; he yet avoided, in the common conduct of life, the imputation of deiſm and profaneneſs. Even in his own family, and to his wife Terentia, whom he highly truſted, he was willing to appear a devout religioniſt; and there remains a letter, addreſſed to her, in which he ſeriouſly deſires her to offer ſacrifice to Apollo and Æſculapius, in gratitude for the recovery of his health ‖.

Pompey's devotion was much more ſincere: In all his conduct, during the civil wars, he paid a great regard to auguries, dreams, and propheſies §. Auguſtus was tainted with ſuperſtition of every kind. As it is reported of Milton, that his poetical genius never flowed with eaſe and abundance in the ſpring; ſo Auguſtus obſerved, that his own genius for dreaming never was ſo perfect during that ſeaſon, nor was ſo much to be relied on, as during the reſt of the year. That great

† Claudii Rutilii Numitiani iter, lib. i. l. 386.

‡ In vita Adriani.

‖ Lib. xiv. epiſt. 7.

§ Cicero de Divin. lib. ii. c. 24.

great and able emperor was alſo extremely uneaſy, when he happened to change his ſhoes, and put the right foot ſhoe on the left foot*. In ſhort, it cannot be doubted, but the votaries of the eſtabliſhed ſuperſtition of antiquity were as numerous in every ſtate, as thoſe of the modern religion are at preſent. Its influence was as univerſal; though it was not ſo great. As many people gave their aſſent to it; though that aſſent was not ſeemingly ſo ſtrong, preciſe, and affirmative.

We may obſerve, that, notwithſtanding the dogmatical, imperious ſtyle of all ſuperſtition, the conviction of the religioniſts, in all ages, is more affected than real, and ſcarcely ever approaches, in any degree, to that ſolid belief and perſuaſion which governs us in the common affairs of life. Men dare not avow, even to their own hearts, the doubts which they entertain on ſuch ſubjects: They make a merit of implicit faith; and diguiſe to themſelves their real infidelity, by the ſtrongeſt aſſeverations and moſt poſitive bigotry. But nature is too hard for all their endeavours, and ſuffers not the obſcure, glimmering light, afforded in thoſe ſhadowy regions, to equal the ſtrong impreſſions, made by common ſenſe and by experience. The uſual courſe of men's conduct belies their words, and ſhows, that their aſſent in theſe matters is ſome unaccountable operation of the mind between diſbelief and conviction, but approaching much nearer to the former than to the latter.

Since, therefore, the mind of man appears of ſo looſe and unſteady a texture, that, even at preſent, when ſo many perſons find an intereſt in continually employing on it the chiſſel and the hammer, yet are they not able to engrave theological tenets with any laſting impreſſion; how

* Sueton. Aug. cap. 90, 91, 92. Plin. lib. ii. cap. 7.

how much more muſt this have been the caſe in ancient times, when the retainers to the holy function were ſo much fewer in compariſon? No wonder, that the appearances were then very inconſiſtent, and that men, on ſome occaſions might ſeem determined infidels, and enemies to the eſtabliſhed religion, without being ſo in reality; or at leaſt, without knowing their own minds in that particular.

Another cauſe, which rendered the ancient religions much looſer than the modern, is, that the former were *traditional* and the latter are *ſcriptural*; and the tradition in the former was complex, contradictory, and, on many occaſions, doubtful; ſo that it could not poſſibly be reduced to any ſtandard and canon, or afford any determinate articles of faith. The ſtories of the gods were numberleſs like the popiſh legends; and though every one, almoſt, believed a part of theſe ſtories, yet no one could believe or know the whole: While, at the ſame time, all muſt have acknowledged, that no one part ſtood on a better foundation than the reſt. The traditions of different cities and nations were alſo, on many occaſions, directly oppoſite; and no reaſon could be aſſigned for preferring one to the other. And as there was an infinite number of ſtories, with regard to which tradition was nowiſe poſitive; the gradation was inſenſible, from the moſt fundamental articles of faith, to thoſe looſe and precarious fictions. The pagan religion, therefore, ſeemed to vaniſh like a cloud, whenever one approached to it, and examined it piecemeal. It could never be aſcertained by any fixed dogmas and principles. And though this did not convert the generality of mankind from ſo abſurd a faith; for when will the people be reaſonable? yet it made them faulter and heſitate more in maintaining their principles, and

was even apt to produce, in certain diſpoſitions of mind, ſome practices and opinions, which had the appearance of determined infidelity.

To which we may add, that the fables of the pagan religion were, of themſelves, light, eaſy, and familiar; without devils, or ſeas of brimſtone, or any object that could much terrify the imagination. Who could forbear ſmiling, when he thought of the loves of Mars and Venus, or the amorous frolics of Jupiter and Pan? In this reſpect, it was a true poetical religion; if it had not rather too much levity for the graver kinds of poetry. We find that it has been adopted by modern bards; nor have theſe talked with greater freedom and irreverence of the gods, whom they regarded as fictions, than the ancients did of the real objects of their devotion.

The inference is by no means juſt, that, becauſe a ſyſtem of religion has made no deep impreſſion on the minds of a people, it muſt therefore have been poſitively rejected by all men of common ſenſe, and that oppoſite principles, in ſpite of the prejudices of education, were generally eſtabliſhed by argument and reaſoning. I know not, but a contrary inference may be more probable. The leſs importunate and aſſuming any ſpecies of ſuperſtition appears, the leſs will it provoke men's ſpleen and indignation, or engage them into enquiries concerning its foundation and origin. This in the mean time is obvious, that the empire of all religious faith over the underſtanding is wavering and uncertain, ſubject to every variety of humour, and dependent on the preſent incidents, which ſtrike the imagination. The difference is only in the degrees. An ancient will place a ſtroke of impiety and one of ſuperſtition alternately, throughout a whole

whole diſcourſe*: A modern often thinks in the ſame way, though he may be more guarded in his expreſſion.

Lucian tells us expreſsly †, that whoever believed not the moſt ridiculous fables of paganiſm was deemed by the people profane and impious. To what purpoſe, indeed, would that agreeable author have employed the whole force of his wit and ſatire againſt the national religion, had not that religion been generally believed by his countrymen and contemporaries?

Livy ‡ acknowledges as frankly, as any divine would at preſent, the common incredulity of his age; but then he condemns it as ſeverely. And who can imagine, that a ſuperſtition, which could delude ſo ingenious a man, would not alſo impoſe on the generality of the people?

The Stoics beſtowed many magnificent and even impious epithets on their ſage; that he alone was rich, free, a king, and equal to the immortal gods. They forgot to add, that he was not inferior in prudence and underſtanding to an old woman. For ſurely nothing can be more pitiful than the ſentiments, which that ſect entertained with regard to religious matters; while they ſeriouſly agree with the common augurs, that, when a raven croaks

* Witneſs this remarkable paſſage of Tacitus: "Præter multiplices rerum humanarum caſus, cœlo terraque prodigia, & fulminum monitus & futurorum præſagia, læta, triſtia, ambigua, manifeſta. Nec enim unquam atrocioribus populi Romani cladibus, magiſque juſtis judiciis approbatum eſt, non eſſe curæ Diis ſecuritatem noſtram, eſſe ultionem." Hiſt. lib. 1. Auguſtus's quarrel with Neptune is an inſtance of the ſame kind. Had not the emperor believed Neptune to be a real being, and to have dominion over the ſea, where had been the foundation of his anger? And if he believed it, what madneſs to provoke ſtill farther that deity? The ſame obſervation may be made upon Quintilian's exclamation, on account of the death of his children, lib. vi. Præf.

† Philopſeudes. ‡ Lib. x. cap. 40.

croaks from the left, it is a good omen; but a bad one, when a rook makes a noiſe from the ſame quarter. Panætius was the only Stoic, among the Greeks, who ſo much as doubted with regard to auguries and divinations *. Marcus Antoninus † tells us, that he himſelf had received many admonitions from the gods in his ſleep. It is true, Epictetus ‡ forbids us to regard the language of rooks and ravens; but it is not, that they do not ſpeak truth: It is only, becauſe they can foretel nothing but the breaking of our neck or the forfeiture of our eſtate; which are circumſtances, ſays he, that nowiſe concern us. Thus the Stoics join a philoſophical enthuſiaſm to a religious ſuperſtition. The force of their mind, being all turned to the ſide of morals, unbent itſelf in that of religion ‖.

Plato § introduces Socrates affirming, that the accuſation of impiety raiſed againſt him was owing entirely to his rejecting ſuch fables, as thoſe of Saturn's caſtrating his father Uranus, and Jupiter's dethroning Saturn: Yet in a ſubſequent dialogue ⸸, Socrates confeſſes, that the doctrine of the mortality of the ſoul was the received opinion of the people. Is there here any contradiction? Yes, ſurely: But the contradiction is not in Plato; it is in the people, whoſe religious principles in general are always compoſed of the moſt diſcordant parts; eſpecially in an age, when ſuperſtition ſate ſo eaſy and light upon them ⸸⸸.

The

* Cicero de divin. lib. i. cap. 3 & 7.

† Lib. i. § 17. ‡ Ench. § 17.

‖ The Stoics, I own, were not quite orthodox in the eſtabliſhed religion; but one may ſee, from theſe inſtances, that they went a great way: And the people undoubtedly went every length.

§ Eutyphro. ⸸ Phædo.

⸸⸸ See NOTE [DDD].

The ſame Cicero, who affected, in his own family, to appear a devout religioniſt, makes no ſcruple, in a public court of judicature, of treating the doctrine of a future ſtate as a ridiculous fable, to which no body could give any attention *. Salluſt † repreſents Cæſar as ſpeaking the ſame language in the open ſenate ‡.

But that all theſe freedoms implied not a total and univerſal infidelity and ſcepticiſm amongſt the people, is too apparent to be denied. Though ſome parts of the national religion hung looſe upon the minds of men, other parts adhered more cloſely to them: And it was the chief buſineſs of the ſceptical philoſophers to ſhow, that there was no more foundation for one than for the other. This is the artifice of Cotta in the dialogues concerning the *nature of the gods*. He refutes the whole ſyſtem of mythology by leading the orthodox gradually, from the more momentous ſtories, which were believed, to the more frivolous, which every one ridiculed: From the gods to the goddeſſes; from the goddeſſes to the nymphs; from the nymphs to the fawns and ſatyrs. His maſter, Carneades, had employed the ſame method of reaſoning ‖.

Upon the whole, the greateſt and moſt obſervable differences between a *traditional, mythological* religion,

* Pro Cluentio, cap. 61. † De bello Catilin.

‡ Cicero (Tuſc. Quæſt.) lib. i. cap. 5, 6. and Seneca (Epiſt. 24.) as alſo Juvenal (Satyr. 2.), maintain that there is no boy or old woman ſo ridiculous as to believe the poets in their accounts of a future ſtate. Why then does Lucretius ſo highly exalt his maſter for freeing us from theſe terrors? Perhaps the generality of mankind were then in the diſpoſition of Cephalus in Plato (de Rep. lib. i.) who while he was young and healthful could ridicule theſe ſtories; but as ſoon as he became old and infirm, began to entertain apprehenſions of their truth. This we may obſerve not to be unuſual even at preſent.

‖ Sext. Empir. adverſ. Mathem. lib. viii.

religion, and a *systematical, scholastic* one, are two: The former is often more reasonable, as consisting only of a multitude of stories, which, however groundless, imply no express absurdity and demonstrative contradiction; and sits also so easy and light on men's mind, that, though it may be as universally received, it happily makes no such deep impression on the affections and understanding.

SECT. XIII. *Impious conceptions of the divine nature in popular religions of both kinds.*

The primary religion of mankind arises chiefly from an anxious fear of future events; and what ideas will naturally be entertained of invisible, unknown powers, while men lie under dismal apprehensions of any kind, may easily be conceived. Every image of vengeance, severity, cruelty, and malice must occur, and must augment the ghastliness and horror, which oppresses the amazed religionist. A panic having once seized the mind, the active fancy still farther multiplies the objects of terror; while that profound darkness, or, what is worse, that glimmering light, with which we are environed, represents the spectres of divinity under the most dreadful appearances imaginable. And no idea of perverse wickedness can be framed, which those terrified devotees do not readily, without scruple, apply to their deity.

This appears the natural state of religion, when surveyed in one light. But if we consider, on the other hand, that spirit of praise and eulogy, which necessarily has place in all religions, and which is the consequence of these very terrors, we must expect a quite contrary system of theology to prevail. Every virtue, every excellence, must be ascribed

to the divinity, and no exaggeration will be deemed ſufficient to reach thoſe perfections, with which he is endowed. Whatever ſtrains of panegyric can be invented, are immediately embraced, without conſulting any arguments or phænomena: It is eſteemed a ſufficient confirmation of them, that they give us more magnificent ideas of the divine objects of our worſhip and adoration.

Here therefore is a kind of contradiction between the different principles of human nature, which enter into religion. Our natural terrors preſent the notion of a deviliſh and malicious deity: Our propenſity to adulation leads us to acknowledge an excellent and divine. And the influence of theſe oppoſite principles are various, according to the different ſituation of the human underſtanding.

In very barbarous and ignorant nations, ſuch as the Africans and Indians, nay even the Japoneſe, who can form no extenſive ideas of power and knowledge, worſhip may be paid to a being, whom they confeſs to be wicked and deteſtable; though they may be cautious, perhaps, of pronouncing this judgment of him in public, or in his temple, where he may be ſuppoſed to hear their reproaches.

Such rude, imperfect ideas of the Divinity adhere long to all idolaters; and it may ſafely be affirmed, that the Greeks themſelves never got entirely rid of them. It is remarked by Xenophon *, in praiſe of Socrates, that this philoſopher aſſented not to the vulgar opinion, which ſuppoſed the gods to know ſome things, and be ignorant of others: He maintained, that they knew every thing; what was done, ſaid, or even thought. But

* Mem. lib. i.

But as this was a ſtrain of philoſophy † much above the conception of his countrymen, we need not be ſurpriſed, if very frankly, in their books and converſation, they blamed the deities, whom they worſhipped in their temples. It is obſervable, that Herodotus in particular ſcruples not, in many paſſages, to aſcribe *envy* to the gods; a ſentiment, of all others, the moſt ſuitable to a mean and deviliſh nature. The pagan hymns, however, ſung in public worſhip, contained nothing but epithets of praiſe; even while the actions aſcribed to the gods were the moſt barbarous and deteſtable. When Timotheus, the poet, recited a poem to Diana, in which he enumerated, with the greateſt eulogies, all the actions and attributes of that cruel, capricious goddeſs: *May your daughter*, ſaid one preſent, *become ſuch as the deity whom you celebrate* *.

But as men farther exalt their idea of their divinity; it is their notion of his power and knowledge only, not of his goodneſs, which is improved. On the contrary, in proportion to the ſuppoſed extent of his ſcience and authority, their terrors naturally augment; while they believe, that no ſecrecy can conceal them from his ſcrutiny, and that even the inmoſt receſſes of their breaſt lie open before him. They muſt then be careful not to form expreſsly any ſentiment of blame and diſapprobation. All muſt be applauſe, raviſhment, extacy. And while their gloomy apprehenſions make them aſcribe to him meaſures of conduct, which, in human creatures, would be highly blamed, they muſt ſtill affect to praiſe and

† It was conſidered among the ancients, as a very extraordinary, philoſophical paradox, that the preſence of the gods was not confined to the heavens, but were extended every where; as we learn from Lucian. *Hirmotimus ſive De ſectis.*

* Plutarch. de Superſtit.

and admire that conduct in the object of their devotional addreſſes. Thus it may ſafely be affirmed, that popular religions are really, in the conception of their more vulgar votaries, a ſpecies of dæmoniſm; and the higher the deity is exalted in power and knowledge, the lower of courſe is he depreſſed in goodneſs and benevolence; whatever epithets of praiſe may be beſtowed on him by his amazed adorers. Among idolaters, the words may be falſe, and belie the ſecret opinien: But among more exalted religioniſts, the opinion itſelf contracts a kind of falſehood, and belies the inward ſentiment. The heart ſecretly deteſts ſuch meaſures of cruel and implacable vengeance; but the judgment dares not but pronounce them perfect and adorable. And the additional miſery of this inward ſtruggle aggravates all the other terrors, by which theſe unhappy victims to ſuperſtition are for ever haunted.

Lucian * obſerves that a young man, who reads the hiſtory of the gods in Homer or Heſiod, and finds their factions, wars, injuſtice, inceſt, adultery, and other immoralities ſo highly celebrated, is much ſurpriſed afterwards, when he comes into the world, to obſerve that puniſhments are by law inflicted on the ſame actions, which he had been taught to aſcribe to ſuperior beings. The contradiction is ſtill perhaps ſtronger between the repreſentations given us by ſome later religions and our natural ideas of generoſity, lenity, impartiality, and juſtice; and in proportion to the multiplied terrors of theſe religions, the barbarous conceptions of the divinity are multiplied upon us †. Nothing can preſerve untainted the genuine principles of morals in our judgment of human conduct, but the abſolute neceſſity of theſe principles to the exiſtence of ſociety. If common conception can

* Necyomantia.

† See NOTE [EEE.]

can indulge princes in a ſyſtem of ethics, ſomewhat different from that which ſhould regulate private perſons; how much more thoſe ſuperior beings, whoſe attributes, views, and nature are ſo totally unknown to us? *Sunt ſuperis ſua jura* *. The gods have maxims of juſtice peculiar to themſelves.

SECT. XIV. *Bad influence of popular religions on morality.*

Here I cannot forbear obſerving a fact, which may be worth the attention of ſuch as make human nature the object of their enquiry. It is certain, that, in every religion, however ſublime the verbal definition which it gives of its divinity, many of the votaries, perhaps the greateſt number, will ſtill ſeek the divine favour, not by virtue and good morals, which alone can be acceptable to a perfect being, but either by frivolous obſervances, by intemperate zeal, by rapturous extaſies, or by the belief of myſterious and abſurd opinions. The leaſt part of the *Sadder*, as well as of the *Pentateuch*, conſiſts in precepts of morality; and we may alſo be aſſured, that that part was always the leaſt obſerved and regarded. When the old Romans were attacked with a peſtilence, they never aſcribed their ſufferings to their vices, or dreamed of repentance and amendment. They never thought, that they were the general robbers of the world, whoſe ambition and avarice made deſolate the earth, and reduced opulent nations to want and beggary. They only created a dictator ‡, in order to drive a nail into a door; and by that means, they thought that they had ſufficiently appeaſed their incenſed deity.

2 In

* Ovid. Metam. lib. ix. 501.
‡ Called Dictator calvis figendæ cauſa. T. Livii, l. vii. c. 3.

In Ægina, one faction forming a conſpiracy, barbarouſly and treacherouſly aſſaſſinated ſeven hundred of their fellow-citizens; and carried their fury ſo far, that, one miſerable fugitive having fled to the temple, they cut off his hands, by which he clung to the gates, and carrying him out of holy ground, immediately murdered him. *By this impiety*, ſays Herodotus *, (not by the other many cruel aſſaſſinations) *they offended the gods, and contracted an inexpiable guilt.*

Nay, if we ſhould ſuppoſe, what never happens, that a popular religion were found, in which it was expreſsly declared, that nothing but morality could gain the divine favour; if an order of prieſts were inſtituted to inculcate this opinion, in daily ſermons, and with all the arts of perſuaſion; yet ſo inveterate are the people's prejudices, that, for want of ſome other ſuperſtition, they would make the very attendance on theſe ſermons the eſſentials of religion, rather than place them in virtue and good morals. The ſublime prologue of Zaleucus's laws ‡ inſpired not the Locrians, ſo far as we can learn, with any ſounder notions of the meaſures of acceptance with the deity, than were familiar to the other Greeks.

This obſervation, then, holds univerſally: But ſtill one may be at ſome loſs to account for it. It is not ſufficient to obſerve, that the people, every where, degrade their deities into a ſimilitude with themſelves, and conſider them merely as a ſpecies of human creatures, ſomewhat more potent and intelligent. This will not remove the difficulty. For there is no *man* ſo ſtupid, as that, judging by his natural reaſon, he would not eſteem virtue and honeſty the moſt valuable qualities, which any perſon could poſſeſs. Why not aſcribe the ſame ſentiment to his deity? Why not make

* Lib. vi. ‡ To be found in Diod. Sic. lib. xii.

make all religion, or the chief part of it, to confiſt in theſe attainments?

Nor is it ſatisfactory to ſay, that the practice of morality is more difficult than that of ſuperſtition; and is therefore rejected. For, not to mention the exceſſive penances of the *Brachmans* and *Talapoins*; it is certain, that the *Rhamadan* of the Turks, during which the poor wretches, for many days, often in the hotteſt months of the year, and in ſome of the hotteſt climates of world, remain without eating or drinking from the riſing to the ſetting ſun; this *Rhamadan*, I ſay, muſt be more ſevere than the practice of any moral duty, even to the moſt vicious and depraved of mankind. The four lents of the Muſcovites, and the auſterities of ſome *Roman Catholics*, appear more diſagreeable than meekneſs and benevolence. In ſhort, all virtue, when men are reconciled to it by ever ſo little practice, is agreeable: All ſuperſtition is for ever odious and burthenſome.

Perhaps, the following account may be received as a true ſolution of the difficulty. The duties, which a man performs as a friend or parent, ſeem merely owing to his benefactor or children; nor can he be wanting to theſe duties, without breaking through all the ties of nature and morality. A ſtrong inclination may prompt him to the performance: A ſentiment of order and moral obligation joins its force to theſe natural ties: And the whole man, if truly virtuous, is drawn to his duty, without any effort or endeavour. Even with regard to the virtues, which are more auſtere, and more founded on reflection, ſuch as public ſpirit, filial duty, temperance, or integrity; the moral obligation, in our apprehenſion, removes all pretenſion to religious merit; and the virtuous conduct is deemed no more than what we owe to ſociety and to ourſelves. In all this, a ſuperſtitious man finds nothing, which

he has properly performed for the ſake of his deity, or which can peculiarly recommend him to the divine favour and protection. He conſiders not, that the moſt genuine method of ſerving the divinity is by promoting the happineſs of his creatures. He ſtill looks out for ſome more immediate ſervice of the ſupreme Being, in order to allay thoſe terrors, with which he is haunted. And any practice, recommended to him, which either ſerves to no purpoſe in life, or offers the ſtrongeſt violence to his natural inclinations; that practice he will the more readily embrace, on account of thoſe very circumſtances, which ſhould make him abſolutely reject it. It ſeems the more purely religious, becauſe it proceeds from no mixture of any other motive or conſideration. And if, for its ſake, he ſacrifices much of his eaſe and quiet, his claim of merit appears ſtill to riſe upon him, in proportion to the zeal and devotion which he diſcovers. In reſtoring a loan, or paying a debt, his divinity is nowiſe beholden to him; becauſe theſe acts of juſtice are what he was bound to perform, and what many would have performed, were there no god in the univerſe. But if he faſt a day, or give himſelf a ſound whipping; this has a direct reference, in his opinion, to the ſervice of God. No other motive could engage him to ſuch auſterities. By theſe diſtinguiſhed marks of devotion, he has now acquired the divine favour; and may expect, in recompence, protection and ſafety in this world, and eternal happineſs in the next.

Hence the greateſt crimes have been found, in many inſtances, compatible with a ſuperſtitious piety and devotion; Hence, it is juſtly regarded as unſafe to draw any certain inference in favour of a man's morals from the fervour or ſtrictneſs of his religious exerciſes, even though he himſelf believe them ſincere. Nay, it has

been obſerved, that enormities of the blackeſt dey have been rather apt to produce ſuperſtitious terrors, and encreaſe the religious paſſion. Bomilcar, having formed a conſpiracy for aſſaſſinating at once the whole ſenate of Carthage, and invading the liberties of his country, loſt the opportunity, from a continual regard to omens and prophecies. *Thoſe who undertake the moſt criminal and moſt dangerous enterprizes are commonly the moſt ſuperſtitious*; as an ancient hiſtorian * remarks on this occaſion. Their devotion and ſpiritual faith riſe with their fears. Catiline was not contented with the eſtabliſhed deities, and received rites of the national religion: His anxious terrors made him ſeek new inventions of this kind †; which he never probably had dreamed of, had he remained a good citizen, and obedient to the laws of his country.

To which we may add, that, after the commiſſion of crimes, there ariſe remorſes and ſecret horrors, which give no reſt to the mind, but make it have recourſe to religious rites and ceremonies, as expiations of its offences. Whatever weakens or diſorders the internal frame promotes the intereſts of ſuperſtition: And nothing is more deſtructive to them than a manly, ſteady virtue, which either preſerves us from diſaſtrous, melancholy accidents, or teaches us to bear them. During ſuch calm ſunſhine of the mind, theſe ſpectres of falſe divinity never make their appearance. On the other hand, while we abandon ourſelves to the natural undiſciplined ſuggeſtions of our timid and anxious hearts, every kind of barbarity is aſcribed to the ſupreme Being, from the terrors with which we are agitated; and every kind of caprice, from the methods which we embrace in order to appeaſe him. *Barbarity*, *caprice*; theſe qualities,

* Diod. Sic. lib. xv.
† Cic. Catil. i. Salluſt. de bello Catil.

qualities, however nominally disguised, we may universally observe, form the ruling character of the deity in popular religions. Even priests, instead of correcting these depraved ideas of mankind, have often been found ready to foster and encourage them. The more tremendous the divinity is represented, the more tame and submissive do men become to his ministers: And the more unaccountable the measures of acceptance required by him, the more necessary does it become to abandon our natural reason, and yield to their ghostly guidance and direction. Thus it may be allowed, that the artifices of men aggravate our natural infirmities and follies of this kind, but never originally beget them. Their root strikes deeper into the mind, and springs from the essential and universal properties of human nature.

SECT. XV. *General Corollary.*

Though the stupidity of men, barbarous and uninstructed, be so great, that they may not see a sovereign author in the more obvious works of nature, to which they are so much familiarized; yet it scarcely seems possible, that any one of good understanding should reject that idea, when once it is suggested to him. A purpose, an intention, a design is evident in every thing; and when our comprehension is so far enlarged as to contemplate the first rise of this visible system, we must adopt, with the strongest conviction, the idea of some intelligent cause or author. The uniform maxims too, which prevail throughout the whole frame of the universe, naturally, if not necessarily, lead us to conceive this intelligence as single and undivided, where the prejudices of education oppose not so reasonable a theory. Even the contrarieties of nature, by discovering themselves every where, become proofs of some consistent plan,

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and eſtabliſh one ſingle purpoſe or intention, however inexplicable and incomprehenſible.

Good and ill are univerſally intermingled and confounded, happineſs and miſery, wiſdom and folly, virtue and vice. Nothing is pure and entirely of a piece. All advantages are attended with diſadvantages. An univerſal compenſation prevails in all conditions of being and exiſtence. And it is not poſſible for us, by our moſt chimerical wiſhes, to form the idea of a ſtation or ſituation altogether deſirable. The draughts of life, according to the poet's fiction, are always mixed from veſſels on each hand of Jupiter: Or if any cup be preſented altogether pure, it is drawn only, as the ſame poet tells us, from the left-handed veſſel.

The more exquiſite any good is, of which a ſmall ſpecimen is afforded us, the ſharper is the evil, allied to it; and few exceptions are found to this uniform law of nature. The moſt ſprightly wit borders on madneſs; the higheſt effuſions of joy produce the deepeſt melancholy; the moſt raviſhing pleaſures are attended with the moſt cruel laſſitude and diſguſt; the moſt flattering hopes make way for the ſevereſt diſappointments. And, in general, no courſe of life has ſuch ſafety (for happineſs is not to be dreamed of) as the temperate and moderate, which maintains, as far as poſſible, a mediocrity, and a kind of inſenſibility, in every thing.

As the good, the great, the ſublime, the raviſhing are found eminently in the genuine principles of theiſm; it may be expected, from the analogy of nature, that the baſe, the abſurd, the mean, the terrifying will be equally diſcovered in religious fictions and chimeras.

The univerſal propenſity to believe in inviſible, intelligent power, if not an original inſtinct, being at leaſt a general attendant of human nature, may be conſidered as a kind of mark or ſtamp, which the

divine workman has set upon his work; and nothing surely can more dignify mankind, than to be thus selected from all other parts of the creation, and to bear the image or impression of the universal Creator. But consult this image, as it appears in the popular religions of the world. How is the deity disfigured in our representations of him! What caprice, absurdity, and immorality are attributed to him! How much is he degraded even below the character, which we should naturally, in common life, ascribe to a man of sense and virtue!

What a noble privilege is it of human reason to attain the knowledge of the supreme Being; and, from the visible works of nature, be enabled to infer so sublime a principle as its supreme Creator? But turn the reverse of the medal. Survey most nations and most ages. Examine the religious principles, which have, in fact, prevailed in the world. You will scarcely be persuaded, that they are any thing but sick men's dreams: Or perhaps will regard them more as the playsome whimsies of monkies in human shape, than the serious, positive, dogmatical asseverations of a being, who dignifies himself with the name of rational.

Hear the verbal protestations of all men: Nothing so certain as their religious tenets. Examine their lives: You will scarcely think that they repose the smallest confidence in them.

The greatest and truest zeal gives us no security against hypocrisy: The most open impiety is attended with a secret dread and compunction.

No theological absurdities so glaring that they have not, sometimes, been embraced by men of the greatest and most cultivated understanding. No religious precepts so rigorous that they have not been adopted by the most voluptuous and most abandoned of men.

Ignorance

Ignorance is the mother of Devotion: A maxim that is proverbial, and confirmed by general experience. Look out for a people, entirely destitute of religion: If you find them at all, be aſſured, that they are but few degrees removed from brutes.

What ſo pure as ſome of the morals, included in ſome theological ſyſtems? What ſo corrupt as ſome of the practices, to which theſe ſyſtems give riſe?

The comfortable views, exhibited by the belief of futurity, are raviſhing and delightful. But how quickly vaniſh on the appearance of its terrors, which keep a more firm and durable poſſeſſion of the human mind?

The whole is a riddle, an ænigma, an inexplicable myſtery. Doubt, uncertainty, ſuſpence of judgment appear the only reſult of our moſt accurate ſcrutiny, concerning this ſubject. But ſuch is the frailty of human reaſon, and ſuch the irreſiſtible contagion of opinion, that even this deliberate doubt could ſcarcely be upheld; did we not enlarge our view, and oppoſing one ſpecies of ſuperſtition to another, ſet them a quarrelling; while we ourſelves, during their fury and contention, happily make our eſcape, into the calm, though obſcure, regions of philoſophy.

NOTES

TO THE

SECOND VOLUME.

NOTE [A], p. 22.

IT is probable that no more was meant by thofe, who denied innate ideas, than that all ideas were copies of our impreffions; though it muft be confeffed, that the terms, which they employed, were not chofen with fuch caution, nor fo exactly defined, as to prevent all miftakes about their doctrine. For what is meant by *innate?* If innate be equivalent to natural, then all the perceptions and ideas of the mind muft be allowed to be innate or natural, in whatever fenfe we take the latter word, whether in oppofition to what is uncommon, artificial, or miraculous. If by innate be meant, cotemporary to our birth, the difpute feems to be frivolous; nor is it worth while to enquire at what time thinking begins, whether before, at, or after our birth. Again, the word *idea*, feems to be commonly taken in a very loofe fenfe, by Locke and others; as ftanding for any of our perceptions, our fenfations and paffions, as well as thoughts. Now in this fenfe, I fhould defire to know, what can be meant by afferting, that felf-love, or refentment of injuries, or the paffion between the fexes is not innate?

But admitting these terms, *impressions* and *ideas*, in the sense above explained, and understanding by *innate*, what is original or copied from no precedent perception, then may we assert, that all our impressions are innate, and our ideas not innate.

To be ingenuous, I must own it to be my opinion, that Locke was betrayed into this question by the schoolmen, who, making use of undefined terms, draw out their disputes to a tedious length, without ever touching the point in question. A like ambiguity and circumlocution seem to run through that philosopher's reasonings on this as well as most other subjects.

NOTE [B], p. 49.

NOTHING is more usual than for writers, even on *moral*, *political*, or *physical* subjects, to distinguish between *reason* and *experience*, and to suppose, that these species of argumentation are entirely different from each other. The former are taken for the mere result of our intellectual faculties, which, by considering *à priori* the nature of things, and examining the effects, that must follow from their operation, establish particular principles of science and philosophy. The latter are supposed to be derived entirely from sense and observation, by which we learn what has actually resulted from the operation of particular objects, and are thence able to infer, what will, for the future, result from them. Thus, for instance, the limitations and restraints of civil government, and a legal constitution may be defended, either from *reason*, which reflecting on the great frailty and corruption of human nature, teaches, that no man can safely be trusted with unlimited authority; or from *experience* and history, which inform us of the enormous abuses, that ambition, in every age and country, has been found to make of so imprudent a confidence.

The same distinction between reason and experience is maintained in all our deliberations concerning the conduct of life; while the experienced statesman, general, physician, or merchant is trusted and followed; and the unpractised novice, with whatever natural talents endowed, neglected

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and deſpiſed. Though it be allowed, that reaſon may form very plauſible conjectures with regard to the conſequences of ſuch a particular conduct in ſuch particular circumſtances; it is ſtill ſuppoſed imperfect, without the aſſiſtance of experience, which is alone able to give ſtability and certainty to the maxims, derived from ſtudy and reflection.

But notwithſtanding that this diſtinction be thus univerſally received, both in the active and ſpeculative ſcenes of life, I ſhall not ſcruple to pronounce, that it is at bottom, erroneous, at leaſt, ſuperficial.

If we examine thoſe arguments, which, in any of the ſciences above-mentioned, are ſuppoſed to be the mere effects of reaſoning and reflection, they will be found to terminate, at laſt, in ſome general principle or concluſion, for which we can aſſign no reaſon but obſervation and experience. The only difference between them and thoſe maxims, which are vulgarly eſteemed the reſult of pure experience, is that the former cannot be eſtabliſhed without ſome proceſs of thought, and ſome reflection on what we have obſerved, in order to diſtinguiſh its circumſtances, and trace its conſequences: Whereas in the latter, the experienced event is exactly and fully ſimilar to that which we infer as the eſult of any particular ſituation. The hiſtory of a Tiberius or a Nero makes us dread a like tyranny, were our monarchs freed from the reſtraints of laws and ſenates: But the obſervation of any fraud or cruelty in private life is ſufficient, with the aid of a little thought, to give us the ſame apprehenſion; while it ſerves us as an inſtance of the general corruption of human nature, and ſhews us the danger which we muſt incur by repoſing an entire confidence in mankind. In both caſes, it is experience which is ultimately the foundation of our inference and concluſion.

There is no man ſo young and unexperienced, as not to have formed, from obſervation, many general and juſt maxims concerning human affairs and the conduct of life; but it muſt be confeſſed, that, when a man comes to put theſe in practice, he will be extremely liable to error, till time and farther experience both enlarge theſe maxims, and teach him their proper uſe and application. In every ſituation or incident, there are many particular and ſeemingly minute circumſtances, which the man of greateſt talents is, at firſt, apt to overlook, though on them the juſtneſs of his concluſions, and conſequently the prudence

of his conduct, entirely depend. Not to mention, that, to a young beginner, the general obfervations and maxims occur not always on the proper occafions, nor can be immediately applied with due calmnefs and diftinction. The truth is, an unexperienced reafoner could be no reafoner at all, were he abfolutely unexperienced; and when we affign that character to any one, we mean it only in a comparative fenfe, and fuppofe him poffeffed of experience, in a fmaller and more imperfect degree.

NOTE [C], p. 72.

IT may be pretended, that the refiftance which we meet with in bodies, obliging us frequently to exert our force, and call up our power, this gives us the idea of force and power. It is this *nifus* or ftrong endeavour, of which we are confcious, that is the original impreffion from which this idea is copied. But, firft, we attribute power to a vaft number of objects, where we never can fuppofe this refiftance or exertion of force to take place; to the Supreme Being, who never meets with any refiftance; to the mind in its command over its ideas and limbs, in common thinking and motion, where the effect follows immediately upon the will, without any exertion or fummoning up of force; to inanimate matter, which is not capable of this fentiment. *Secondly*, This fentiment of an endeavour to overcome refiftance has no known connexion with any event: What follows it, we know by experience; but could not know it *à priori*. It muft, however, be confeffed, that the animal *nifus*, which we experience, though it can afford no accurate precife idea of power, enters very much into that vulgar, inaccurate idea, which is formed of it.

NOTE [D], p. 78.

I NEED not examine at length the *vis inertiæ* which is fo much talked of in the new philofophy, and which is afcribed

aſcribed to matter. We find by experience, that a body at reſt or in motion continues for ever in its preſent ſtate, till put from it by ſome new cauſe; and that a body impelled takes as much motion from the impelling body as it acquires itſelf. Theſe are facts. When we call this a *vis inertiæ*, we only mark theſe facts, without pretending to have any idea of the inert power; in the ſame manner as, when we talk of gravity, we mean certain effects, without comprehending that active power. It was never the meaning of Sir Iſaac Newton to rob ſecond cauſes of all force or energy; though ſome of his followers have endeavoured to eſtabliſh that theory upon his authority. On the contrary, that great philoſopher had recourſe to an etherial active fluid to explain his univerſal attraction; though he was ſo cautious and modeſt as to allow, that it was a mere hypotheſis, not to be inſiſted on, without more experiments. I muſt confeſs, that there is ſomething in the fate of opinions a little extraordinary. Des Cartes inſinuated that doctrine of the univerſal and ſole efficacy of the Deity, without inſiſting on it. Malebranche and other Carteſians made it the foundation of all their philoſophy. It had, however, no authority in England. Locke, Clarke, and Cudworth, never ſo much as take notice of it, but ſuppoſe all along, that matter has a real, though ſubordinate and derived power. By what means has it become ſo prevalent among our modern metaphyſicians?

NOTE [E], p. 83.

ACCORDING to theſe explications and definitions, the idea of *power* is relative as much as that of *cauſe*; and, both have a reference to an effect, or ſome other event conſtantly conjoined with the former. When we conſider the *unknown* circumſtance of an object, by which the degree or quantity of its effect is fixed and determined, we call that its power: And accordingly, it is allowed by all philoſophers, that the effect is the meaſure of the power. But if they had any idea of power, as it is in itſelf, why could not they meaſure it in itſelf? The diſpute whether the force of a body in motion be as its velocity, or the ſquare of its velocity; this diſpute, I ſay, needed not be decided by comparing its effects in equal or unequal times; but by a direct menſuration and compariſon.

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As to the frequent uſe of the words, Force, Power, Energy, *&c.* which every where occur in common converſation, as well as in philoſophy; that is no proof, that we are acquainted, in any inſtance, with the connecting principle between cauſe and effect, or can account ultimately for the production of one thing by another. Theſe words, as commonly uſed, have very looſe meanings annexed to them; and their ideas are very uncertain and confuſed. No animal can put external bodies in motion without the ſentiment of a *niſus* or endeavour; and every animal has a ſentiment or feeling from the ſtroke or blow of an external object, that is in motion. Theſe ſenſations, which are merely animal, and from which we can *à priori* draw no inference, we are apt to transfer to inanimate objects, and to ſuppoſe, that they have ſome ſuch feelings, whenever they transfer or receive motion. With regard to energies, which are exerted, without our annexing to them any idea of communicated motion, we conſider only the conſtant experienced conjunction of the events; and as we *feel* a cuſtomary connection between the ideas, we transfer that feeling to the objects; as nothing is more uſual than to apply to external bodies every internal ſenſation, which they occaſion.

NOTE [F], p. 100.

THE prevalence of the doctrine of liberty may be accounted for, from another cauſe, *viz.* a falſe ſenſation or ſeeming experience which we have, or may have, of liberty or indifference, in many of our actions. The neceſſity of any action, whether of matter or of mind, is not, properly ſpeaking, a quality in the agent, but in any thinking or intelligent being, who may conſider the action; and it conſiſts chiefly in the determination of his thoughts to infer the exiſtence of that action from ſome preceding objects; as liberty, when oppoſed to neceſſity, is nothing but the want of that determination, and a certain looſeneſs or indifference, which we feel, in paſſing, or not paſſing, from the idea of one object to that of any ſucceeding one. Now we may obſerve,

that,

that, though, in *reflecting* on human actions, we ſeldom feel ſuch a looſeneſs or indifference, but are commonly able to infer them with conſiderable certainty from their motives, and from the diſpoſitions of the agent; yet it frequently happens, that, in *performing* the actions themſelves, we are ſenſible of ſomething like it: And as all reſembling objects are readily taken for each other, this has been employed as a demonſtrative and even intuitive proof of human liberty. We feel, that our actions are ſubject to our will, on moſt occaſions; and imagine we feel, that the will itſelf is ſubject to nothing, becauſe, when by a denial of it we are provoked to try, we feel, that it moves eaſily every way, and produces an image of itſelf, (or a *Velleity*, as it is called in the ſchools) even on that ſide, on which it did not ſettle. This image, or faint motion, we perſuade ourſelves, could, at that time, have been compleated into the thing itſelf; becauſe, ſhould that be denied, we find, upon a ſecond trial, that, at preſent, it can. We conſider not, that the fantaſtical deſire of ſhewing liberty, is here the motive of our actions. And it ſeems certain, that, however we may imagine we feel liberty within ourſelves, a ſpectator can commonly infer our actions from our motives and character; and even where he cannot, he concludes in general, that he might, were he perfectly acquainted with every circumſtance of our ſituation and temper, and the moſt ſecret ſprings of our complexion and diſpoſition. Now this is the very eſſence of neceſſity, according to the foregoing doctrine.

NOTE [G], p. 102.

THUS, if a cauſe be defined, *that which produces any thing*; it is eaſy to obſerve, that *producing* is ſynonimous to *cauſing*. In like manner, if a cauſe be defined, *that by which any thing exiſts*; this is liable to the ſame objection. For what is meant by theſe words, *by which?* Had it been ſaid, that a cauſe is *that* after which *any thing conſtantly exiſts*; we ſhould have underſtood the terms. For this is, indeed, all we know of the matter. And this conſtancy forms the very eſſence of neceſſity, nor have we any other idea of it.

NOTE

NOTE [H], p. 114.

SINCE all reafoning concerning facts or caufes is derived merely from cuftom, it may be afked how it happens, that men fo much furpafs animals in reafoning, and one man fo much furpaffes another? Has not the fame cuftom the fame influence on all?

We fhall here endeavour briefly to explain the great difference in human underftandings: After which the reafon of the difference between men and animals will eafily be comprehended.

1. When we have lived any time, and have been accuftomed to the uniformity of nature, we acquire a general habit, by which we always transfer the known to the unknown, and conceive the latter to refemble the former. By means of this general habitual principle, we regard even one experiment as the foundation of reafoning, and expect a fimilar event with fome degree of certainty, where the experiment has been made accurately, and free from all foreign circumftances. It is therefore confidered as a matter of great importance to obferve the confequences of things; and as one man may very much furpafs another in attention and memory and obfervation, this will make a very great difference in their reafoning.

2. Where there is a complication of caufes to produce any effect, one mind may be much larger than another, and better able to comprehend the whole fyftem of objects, and to infer juftly their confequences.

3. One man is able to carry on a chain of confequences to a greater length than another.

4. Few men can think long without running into a confufion of ideas, and miftaking one for another; and there are various degrees of this infirmity.

5. The circumftance, on which the effect depends, is frequently involved in other circumftances, which are foreign and extrinfic. The feparation of it often requires great attention, accuracy, and fubtilty.

6. The

6. The forming of general maxims from particular obſervation is a very nice operation; and nothing is more uſual, from haſte or a narrowneſs of mind, which ſees not on all ſides, than to commit miſtakes in this particular.

7. When we reaſon from analogies, the man, who has the greater experience or the greater promptitude of ſuggeſting analogies, will be the better reaſoner.

8. Byaſſes from prejudice, education, paſſion, party, &c. hang more upon one mind than another.

9. After we have acquired a confidence in human teſtimony, books and converſation enlarge much more the ſphere of one man's experience and thought than thoſe of another.

It would be eaſy to diſcover many other circumſtances that make a difference in the underſtanding of men.

NOTE [I], p. 122.

NO Indian, it is evident, could have experience that water did not freeze in cold climates. This is placing nature in a ſituation quite unknown to him; and it is impoſſible for him to tell *à priori* what will reſult from it. It is making a new experiment, the conſequence of which is always uncertain. One may ſometimes conjecture from analogy what will follow; but ſtill this is but conjecture. And it muſt be confeſſed, that, in the preſent caſe of freezing, the event follows contrary to the rules of analogy, and is ſuch as a rational Indian would not look for. The operations of cold upon water are not gradual, according to the degrees of cold; but whenever it comes to the freezing point, the water paſſes in a moment, from the utmoſt liquidity to perfect hardneſs. Such an event, therefore, may be denominated *extraordinary*, and requires a pretty ſtrong teſtimony, to render it credible to people in a warm climate: But ſtill it is not *miraculous*, nor contrary to uniform experience of the courſe of nature in caſes where all the circumſtances are the ſame. The inhabitants of Sumatra have always ſeen water fluid in their own climate, and the freezing of their rivers ought to be deemed a prodigy: But they never ſaw water in Muſcovy during the winter;

ter; and therefore they cannot reasonably be positive what would there be the consequence.

NOTE [K], p. 123.

SOMETIMES an event may not, *in itself*, *seem* to be contrary to the laws of nature, and yet, if it were real, it might, by reason of some circumstances, be denominated a miracle; because, in *fact*, it is contrary to these laws. Thus if a person, claiming a divine authority, should command a sick person to be well, a healthful man to fall down dead, the clouds to pour rain, the winds to blow, in short, should order many natural events, which immediately follow upon his command; these might justly be esteemed miracles, because they are really, in this case, contrary to the laws of nature. For if any suspicion remain, that the event and command concurred by accident, there is no miracle and no transgression of the laws of nature. If this suspicion be removed, there is evidently a miracle, and a transgression of these laws; because nothing can be more contrary to nature than that the voice or command of a man should have such an influence. A miracle may be accurately defined, *a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent.* A miracle may either be discoverable by men or not. This alters not its nature and essence. The raising of a house or ship into the air is a visible miracle. The raising of a feather, when the wind wants ever so little of a force requisite for that purpose, is as real a miracle, though not so sensible with regard to us.

NOTE [L], p. 133.

THIS book was writ by Monf. Montgeron, counsellor or judge of the parliament of Paris, a man of figure and character, who was also a martyr to the cause, and is now said to be somewhere in a dungeon on account of his book.

There is another book in three volumes (called *Recueil des Miracles de l'Abbe* Paris) giving an account of many of these miracles, and accompanied with prefatory discourses, which are very well written. There runs, however, through the

the whole of theſe a ridiculous compariſon between the miracles of our Saviour and thoſe of the Abbé; wherein it is aſſerted, that the evidence for the latter is equal to that for the former: As if the teſtimony of men could ever be put in the balance with that of God himſelf, who conducted the pen of the inſpired writers. If theſe writers, indeed, were to be conſidered merely as human teſtimony, the French author is very moderate in his compariſon; ſince he might, with ſome appearance of reaſon, pretend, that the Janſeniſt miracles much ſurpaſs the other in evidence and authority. The following circumſtances are drawn from authentic papers, inſerted in the above-mentioned book.

Many of the miracles of Abbé Paris were proved immediately by witneſſes before the officiality or biſhop's court at Paris, under the eye of cardinal Noailles, whoſe character for integrity and capacity was never conteſted even by his enemies.

His ſucceſſor in the archbiſhopric was an enemy to the Janſeniſts, and for that reaſon promoted to the ſee by the court. Yet 22 rectors or *cures* of Paris, with infinite earneſtneſs, preſs him to examine thoſe miracles, which they aſſert to be known to the whole world, and undiſputably certain: But he wiſely forbore.

The Moliniſt party had tried to diſcredit theſe miracles in one inſtance, that of Mademoiſelle le Franc. But, beſides that their proceedings were in many reſpects the moſt irregular in the world, particularly in citing only a few of the Janſeniſt witneſſes, whom they tampered with: Beſides this, I ſay, they ſoon found themſelves overwhelmed by a cloud of new witneſſes, one hundred and twenty in number, moſt of them perſons of credit and ſubſtance in Paris, who gave oath for the miracle. This was accompanied with a ſolemn and earneſt appeal to the parliament. But the parliament were forbidden by authority to meddle in the affair. It was at laſt obſerved, that where men are heated by zeal and enthuſiaſm, there is no degree of human teſtimony ſo ſtrong as may not be procured for the greateſt abſurdity: And thoſe who will be ſo ſilly as to examine the affair by that medium, and ſeek particular

flaws in the teſtimony, are almoſt ſure to be confounded. It muſt be a miſerable impoſture, indeed, that does not prevail in that conteſt.

All who have been in France about that time have heard of the reputation of Monſ. Heraut, the *lieutenant de Police*, whoſe vigilance, penetration, activity, and extenſive intelligence have been much talked of. This magiſtrate, who by the nature of his office is almoſt abſolute, was veſted with full powers, on purpoſe to ſuppreſs or diſcredit theſe miracles; and he frequently ſeized immediately, and examined the witneſſes and ſubjects of them: But never could reach any thing ſatisfactory againſt them.

In the caſe of Mademoiſelle Thibaut he ſent the famous De Sylva to examine her; whoſe evidence is very curious. The phyſician declares, that it was impoſſible ſhe could have been ſo ill as was proved by witneſſes; becauſe it was impoſſible ſhe could, in ſo ſhort a time, have recovered ſo perfectly as he found her. He reaſoned, like a man of ſenſe, from natural cauſes; but the oppoſite party told him, that the whole was a miracle, and that his evidence was the very beſt proof of it.

The Moliniſts were in a ſad dilemma. They durſt not aſſert the abſolute inſufficiency of human evidence, to prove a miracle. They were obliged to ſay, that theſe miracles were wrought by witchcraft and the devil. But they were told, that this was the reſource of the Jews of old.

No Janſeniſt was ever embarraſſed to account for the ceſſation of the miracles, when the church-yard was ſhut up by the king's edict. It was the touch of the tomb, which produced theſe extraordinary effects; and when no one could approach the tomb, no effects could be expected. God, indeed, could have thrown down the walls in a moment; but he is maſter of his own graces and works, and it belongs not to us to account for them. He did not throw down the walls of every city like thoſe of Jericho, on the ſounding of the rams horns, nor break up the priſon of every apoſtle, like that of St. Paul.

No

No leſs a man, than the Duc de Chatillon, a duke and peer of France, of the higheſt rank and family, gives evidence of a miraculous cure, performed upon a ſervant of his, who had lived ſeveral years in his houſe with a viſible and palpable infirmity.

I ſhall conclude with obſerving, that no clergy are more celebrated for ſtrictneſs of life and manners than the ſecular clergy of France, particularly the rectors or cures of Paris, who bear teſtimony to theſe impoſtures.

The learning, genius, and probity of the gentlemen, and the auſterity of the nuns of Port-Royal, have been much celebrated all over Europe. Yet they all give evidence for a miracle, wrought on the niece of the famous Paſcal, whoſe ſanctity of life, as well as extraordinary capacity, is well known. The famous Racine gives an account of this miracle in his famous hiſtory of Port-Royal, and fortifies it with all the proofs, which a multitude of nuns, prieſts, phyſicians, and men of the world, all of them of undoubted credit, could beſtow upon it. Several men of letters, particularly the biſhop of Tournay, thought this miracle ſo certain, as to employ it in the refutation of atheiſts and free-thinkers. The queen-regent of France, who was extremely prejudiced againſt the Port-Royal, ſent her own phyſician to examine the miracle, who returned an abſolute convert. In ſhort, the ſupernatural cure was ſo unconteſtable, that it ſaved, for a time, that famous monaſtery from the ruin with which it was threatened by the Jeſuits. Had it been a cheat, it had certainly been detected by ſuch ſagacious and powerful antagoniſts, and muſt have haſtened the ruin of the contrivers. Our divines, who can build up a formidable caſtle from ſuch deſpicable materials; what a prodigious fabric could they have reared from theſe and many other circumſtances, which I have not mentioned! How often would the great names of Paſcal, Racine, Arnaud, Nicole, have reſounded in our ears? But if they be wiſe, they had better adopt the miracle, as being more worth, a thouſand times, than all the reſt of the collection. Beſides, it may ſerve very much to their purpoſe. For that miracle was really performed by the touch of an authentic holy prickle of the

the holy thorn, which composed the holy crown, which, &c.

NOTE [M], p. 155.

IN general, it may, I think, be established as a maxim, that where any cause is known only by its particular effects, it must be impossible to infer any new effects from that cause; since the qualities, which are requisite to produce these new effects along with the former, must either be different, or superior, or of more extensive operation, than those which simply produce the effect, whence alone the cause is supposed to be known to us. We can never, therefore, have any reason to suppose the existence of these qualities. To say, that the new effects proceed only from a continuation of the same energy, which is already known from the first effects, will not remove the difficulty. For even granting this to be the case (which can seldom be supposed), the very continuation and exertion of a like energy (for it is impossible it can be absolutely the same), I say, this exertion of a like energy, in a different period of space and time, is a very arbitrary supposition, and what there cannot possibly be any traces of in the effects, from which all our knowledge of the cause is originally derived. Let the *inferred* cause be exactly proportioned (as it should be) to the known effect; and it is impossible that it can possess any qualities, from which new or different effects can be *inferred*.

NOTE [N], p. 165.

THIS argument is drawn from Dr. Berkley; and indeed most of the writings of that very ingenious author form the best lessons of scepticism, which are to be found either among the ancient or modern philosophers, Bayle not excepted. He professes, however, in his title-page (and undoubtedly with great truth) to have composed his book against the sceptics as well as against the atheists and free-thinkers. But that all his arguments, though otherwise intended, are, in reality, merely sceptical, appears from this, *that they admit of no answer and produce no conviction*.

conviction. Their only effect is to cause that momentary amazement and irresolution and confusion, which is the result of scepticism.

NOTE [O], p. 166.

WHATEVER disputes there may be about mathematical points, we must allow that there are physical points; that is, parts of extension, which cannot be divided or lessened, either by the eye or imagination. These images, then, which are present to the fancy or senses, are absolutely indivisible, and consequently must be allowed by mathematicians to be infinitely less than any real part of extension; and yet nothing appears more certain to reason, than that an infinite number of them composes an infinite extension. How much more an infinite number of those infinitely small parts of extension, which are still supposed infinitely divisible.

NOTE [P], p. 168.

IT seems to me not impossible to avoid these absurdities and contradictions, if it be admitted, that there is no such thing as abstract or general ideas, properly speaking; but that all general ideas are, in reality, particular ones, attached to a general term, which recalls, upon occasion, other particular ones, that resemble, in certain circumstances, the idea, present to the mind. Thus when the term Horse is pronounced, we immediately figure to ourselves the idea of a black or a white animal, of a particular size or figure: But as that term is also usually applied to animals of other colours, figures and sizes, these ideas, though not actually present to the imagination, are easily recalled; and our reasoning and conclusion proceed in the same way, as if they were actually present. If this be admitted (as seems reasonable) it follows that all the ideas of quantity, upon which mathematicians reason, are nothing but particular, and such as are suggested by the senses and imagination, and consequently, cannot be infinitely divisible. It is sufficient to have dropped this hint at present, without prosecuting it any farther. It certainly concerns all lovers of science not

to

to expofe themfelves to the ridicule and contempt of the ignorant by their conclufions; and this feems the readieft folution of thefe difficulties.

NOTE [Q], p. 174.

THAT impious maxim of the ancient philofophy, *Ex nihilo, nihil fit*, by which the creation of matter was excluded, ceafes to be a maxim, according to this philofophy. Not only the will of the fupreme Being may create matter; but, for aught we know *a priori*, the will of any other being might create it, or any other caufe, that the moft whimfical imagination can affign.

NOTE [R], p. 193.

THAT property is a fpecies of *relation*, which produces a connexion between the perfon and the object is evident: The imagination paffes naturally and eafily from the confideration of a field to that of the perfon to whom it belongs. It may alfo be afked, how this relation is refolvable into any of thofe three, viz. *caufation*, *contiguity*, and *refemblance*, which we have affirmed to be the only connecting principles among ideas. To be the proprietor of any thing is to be the fole perfon, who, by the laws of fociety, has a right to difpofe of it, and to enjoy the benefit of it. This right has at leaft a tendency to procure the perfon the exercife of it; and in fact does commonly procure him that advantage. For rights which had no influence, and never took place, would be no rights at all. Now a perfon who difpofes of an object, and reaps benefit from it, both produces, or may produce, effects on it, and is affected by it. Property therefore is a fpecies of *caufation*. It enables the perfon to produce alterations on the object, and it fuppofes that his condition is improved and altered by it. It is indeed the relation the moft interefting of any, and occurs the moft frequently to the mind.

NOTE

NOTE [S], p. 238.

THIS fiction of a ſtate of nature, as a ſtate of war, was not firſt ſtarted by Mr. Hobbes, as is commonly imagined. Plato endeavours to refute an hypotheſis very like it in the 2d, 3d, and 4th books de republica. Cicero, on the contrary, ſuppoſes it certain and univerſally acknowledged in the following paſſage. "Quis enim veſtrum, judices, ignorat, ita "naturam rerum tuliſſe, ut quodam tempore homines, "nondum neque naturali, neque civili jure deſcripto, fuſi "per agros, ac diſperſi vagarentur tantumque haberent "quantum manu ac viribus, per cædem ac vulnera, aut "eripere, aut retinere potuiſſent? Qui igitur primi virtute "& conſilio præſtanti extiterunt, ii perſpecto genere huma-"næ docilitatis atque ingenii, diſſipatos, unum in locum "congregarunt, eoſque ex feritate illa ad juſtitiam ac man-"ſuetudinem tranſduxerunt. Tum res ad communem "utilitatem, quas publicas appellamus, tum conventicula "hominum, quæ poſtea civitates nominatæ ſunt, tum do-"micilia conjuncta, quas urbes dicamus, invento & divino "& humano jure, mœnibus ſepſerunt. Atque inter hanc "vitam, perpolitam humanitate, & illam immanem, nihil "tam intereſt quam JUS atque VIS. Horum utro uti "nolimus, altero eſt utendum. Vim volumus extingui? "Jus valeat neceſſe eſt, id eſt, judicia, quibus omne jus "continetur. Judicia diſplicent, aut nulla, ſunt? Vis do-"minetur neceſſe eſt? Hæc vident omnes." *Pro. Sext.* l. 42.

NOTE [T], p. 245.

THE author of *L'Eſpirt des Loix.* This illuſtrious writer, however, ſets out with a different theory, and ſuppoſes all right to be founded on certain *rapports* or relations; which is a ſyſtem, that, in my opinion, never will be reconciled with true philoſophy. Father Malebranche, as far as I can learn, was the firſt that ſtarted this abſtract theory of morals, which was afterwards adopted by Cudworth, Clarke, and others; and as it excludes all ſentiment, and pretends to found every thing on reaſon, it has not wanted followers

followers in this philosophic age. See Section I. Appendix I. With regard to justice, the virtue here treated of, the inference against this theory seems short and conclusive. Property is allowed to be dependent on civil laws; civil laws are allowed to have no other object, but the interest of society: This therefore must be allowed to be the sole foundation of property and justice. Not to mention, that our obligation itself to obey the magistrate and his laws is founded on nothing but the interests of society.

If the ideas of justice, sometimes, do not follow the dispositions of civil law; we shall find, that these cases, instead of objections, are confirmations of the theory delivered above. Where a civil law is so perverse as to cross all the interests of society, it loses all its authority, and men judge by the ideas of natural justice, which are conformable to those interests. Sometimes also civil laws, for useful purposes, require a ceremony or form to any deed; and where that is wanting, their decrees run contrary to the usual tenour of justice; but one who takes advantage of such chicanes, is not commonly regarded as an honest man. Thus, the interests of society require, that contracts be fulfilled; and there is not a more material article either of natural or civil justice: But the omission of a trifling circumstance will often, by law, invalidate a contract, *in foro humana*, but not *in foro conscientiæ*, as divines express themselves. In these cases, the magistrate is supposed only to withdraw his power of enforcing the right, not to have altered the right. Where his intention extends to the right, and is conformable to the interests of society; it never fails to alter the right; a clear proof of the origin of justice and of property, as assigned above.

NOTE [U], p. 247.

IT is evident, that the will or consent alone never transfers property, nor causes the obligation of a promise, (for the same reasoning extends to both) but the will must be expressed by words or signs, in order to impose a tye upon any man. The expression being once brought in as subservient to the will,

will, ſoon becomes the principal part of the promiſe; nor will a man be leſs bound by his word, though he ſecretly give a different direction to his intention, and with-hold the aſſent of his mind. But though the expreſſion makes, on moſt occaſions, the whole of the promiſe, yet it does not always ſo; and one who ſhould make uſe of any expreſſion, of which he knows not the meaning, and which he uſes without any ſenſe of the conſequences, would not certainly be bound by it. Nay, though he know its meaning, yet if he uſe it in jeſt only, and with ſuch ſigns as evidently ſhow, that he has no ſerious intention of binding himſelf, he would not lie under any obligation of performance; but it is neceſſary, that the words be a perfect expreſſion of the will, without any contrary ſigns. Nay, even this we muſt not carry ſo far as to imagine, that one, whom, by our quickneſs of underſtanding, we conjecture, from certain ſigns, to have an intention of deceiving us, is not bound by his expreſſion or verbal promiſe, if we accept of it; but muſt limit this concluſion to thoſe caſes where the ſigns are of a different nature from thoſe of deceit. All theſe contradictions are eaſily accounted for, if juſtice ariſe entirely from its uſefulneſs to ſociety; but will never be explained on any other hypotheſis.

It is remarkable, that the moral deciſions of the *Jeſuits* and other relaxed caſuiſts, were commonly formed in proſecution of ſome ſuch ſubtilties of reaſoning as are here pointed out, and proceed as much from the habit of ſcholaſtic refinement as from any corruption of the heart, if we may follow the authority of Monſ. Bayle. See his Dictionary, article Loyola. And why has the indignation of mankind riſen ſo high againſt theſe caſuiſts; but becauſe every one perceived, that human ſociety could not ſubſiſt were ſuch practices authorized, and that morals muſt always be handled with a view to public intereſt, more than philoſophical regularity? If the ſecret direction of the intention, ſaid every man of ſenſe, could invalidate a contract; where is our ſecurity? And yet a metaphyſical ſchoolman might think, that, where an intention was ſuppoſed to be requiſite, if that intention really had not place,

place, no confequence ought to follow, and no obligation be impofed. The cafuiftical fubtilties may not be greater than the fubtilties of lawyers, hinted at above; but as the former are *pernicious*, and the latter *innocent* and even *neceffary*, this is the reafon of the very different reception they meet with from the world.

It is a doctrine of the church of Rome, that the prieft, by a fecret direction of his intention, can invalidate any facrament. This pofition is derived from a ftrict and regular profecution of the obvious truth, that empty words alone, without any meaning or intention in the fpeaker, can never be attended with any effect. If the fame conclufion be not admitted in reafonings concerning civil contracts, where the affair is allowed to be of fo much lefs confequence than the eternal falvation of thoufands, it proceeds entirely from men's fenfe of the danger and inconvenience of the doctrine in the former cafe: And we may thence obferve, that however pofitive, arrogant, and dogmatical any fuperftition may appear, it never can convey any thorough perfuafion of the reality of its objects, or put them, in any degree, on a balance with the common incidents of life, which we learn from daily obfervation and experimental reafoning.

NOTE [X], p. 255.

THE only folution, which Plato gives to all the objections that might be raifed againft the community of women, eftablifhed in his imaginary commonwealth, is Καλλιστα γαρ δη τουτο και λεγεται και λελεξεται, οτι το μεν ωφελιμον καλον. Το δε βλαβερον αισχρον. *Scite enim iftud & dicitur & dicetur, Id quod utile fit honeftum effe, quod autem inutile fit turpe effe.* De. Rep. lib. v. p. 457. ex edit. Ser. And this maxim will admit of no doubt, where public utility is concerned; which is Plato's meaning. And indeed to what other purpofe do all the ideas of chaftity and modefty ferve? *Nifi utile eft quod facimus, fruftra eft gloria*, fays Phædrus. Καλον των βλαβερων ουδεν fays Plutarch *de vitiofo pudore*. Nihil eorum quæ damnofa funt, pulchrum eft. The fame was the opinion of the Stoics. Φασιν ουν οι Στωικοι

Στωικοι αγαθον ειναι ωφελειαν η ουκ ετεραν ωφελειας, ωφελειν μεν λεγοντες την αρετην και την σπουδαιαν πραξιν. Sept. Emp. lib. iii. cap. 20.

NOTE [Y], p. 259.

THAT the lighter machine yield to the heavier, and, in machines of the ſame kind, that the empty yield to the loaded; this rule is founded on convenience. That thoſe who are going to the capital take place of thoſe who are coming from it; this ſeems to be founded on ſome idea of the dignity of the great city, and of the preference of the future to the paſt. From like reaſons, among foot-walkers, the right-hand intitles a man to the wall, and prevents joſtling, which peaceable people find very diſagreeable and inconvenient.

NOTE [Z], p. 262.

WE ought not to imagine, becauſe an inanimate object may be uſeful as well as a man, that therefore it ought alſo, according to this ſyſtem, to merit the appellation of *virtuous*. The ſentiments, excited by utility, are, in the two caſes, very different; and the one is mixed with affection, eſteem, approbation, *&c.* and not the other. In like manner, an inanimate object may have good colour and proportions as well as a human figure. But can we ever be in love with the former? There are a numerous ſet of paſſions and ſentiments, of which thinking rational beings are, by the original conſtitution of nature, the only proper objects: And though the very ſame qualities be transferred to an inſenſible, inanimate being, they will not excite the ſame ſentiments. The beneficial qualities of herbs and minerals are, indeed, ſometimes called their *virtues*; but this is an effect of the caprice of language, which ought not to be regarded in reaſoning. For though there be a ſpecies of approbation attending even inanimate objects, when beneficial, yet this ſentiment is ſo weak, and ſo different from that which is directed to beneficent magiſtrates or ſtateſmen; that they ought not to be ranked under the ſame claſs or appellation.

A very

A very ſmall variation of the object, even where the ſame qualities are preſerved, will deſtroy a ſentiment. Thus, the ſame beauty, transferred to a different ſex, excites no amorous paſſion, where nature is not extremely perverted.

NOTE [AA], p. 264.

UNDUTIFULNESS to parents is diſapproved of by mankind, προορωμενους το μελλον, και συλλογιζομενους οτι το παραπλησιον εκαστοις αυτων συγκυρησει. Ingratitude for a like reaſon (though he ſeems there to mix a more generous regard) συναγανακτουντας μεν τῳ πελας, αναφεροντας δ' επ' αυτους το παραπλησιον εξ ων υπογιγνεται τις εννοια παρεκαστῳ του καθηκοντος δυναμεως και θεωριας. Lib. vi. cap. 4. Perhaps the hiſtorian only meant, that our ſympathy and humanity was more enlivened, by our conſidering the ſimilarity of our caſe with that of the perſon ſuffering; which is a juſt ſentiment.

NOTE [BB], p. 268.

IT is needleſs to puſh our reſearches ſo far as to aſk, why we have humanity or a fellow-feeling with others. It is ſufficient, that this is experienced to be a principle in human nature. We muſt ſtop ſomewhere in our examination of cauſes; and there are, in every ſcience, ſome general principles, beyond which we cannot hope to find any principle more general. No man is abſolutely indifferent to the happineſs and miſery of others. The firſt has a natural tendency to give pleaſure; the ſecond, pain. This every one may find in himſelf. It is not probable, that theſe principles can be reſolved into principles more ſimple and univerſal, whatever attempts may have been made to that purpoſe. But if it were poſſible, it belongs not to the preſent ſubject; and we may here ſafely conſider theſe principles as original: Happy, if we can render all the conſequences ſufficiently plain and perſpicuous!

NOTE [CC], p. 273.

IN proportion to the ſtation which a man poſſeſſes, according to the relations in which he is placed; we always expect from him a greater or leſs degree of good,

and when diſappointed, blame his inutility; and much more do we blame him, if any ill or prejudice ariſe from his conduct and behaviour. When the intereſts of one country interfere with thoſe of another, we eſtimate the merits of a ſtateſman by the good or ill, which reſults to his own country from his meaſures and councils, without regard to the prejudice which he brings on its enemies and rivals. His fellow-citizens are the objects, which lie neareſt the eye, while we determine his character. And as nature has implanted in every one a ſuperior affection to his own country, we never expect any regard to diſtant nations, where a competition ariſes. Not to mention, that, while every man conſults the good of his own community, we are ſenſible, that the general intereſt of mankind is better promoted, than by any looſe indeterminate views to the good of a ſpecies, whence no beneficial action could ever reſult, for want of a duly limited object, on which they could exert themſelves.

NOTE [DD], p. 276.

FOR a like reaſon, the tendencies of actions and characters, not their real accidental conſequences, are alone regarded in our moral determinations or general judgments; though in our real feeling or ſentiment, we cannot help paying greater regard to one whoſe ſtation, joined to virtue, renders him really uſeful to ſociety, than to one, who exerts the ſocial virtues only in good intentions and benevolent affections. Separating the character from the fortune, by an eaſy and neceſſary effort of thought, we pronounce theſe perſons alike, and give them the ſame general praiſe. The udgment corrects or endeavours to correct the appearance: But is not able entirely to prevail over ſentiment.

Why is this peach-tree ſaid to be better than that other; but becauſe it produces more or better fruit? And would not the ſame praiſe be given it, though ſnails or vermin had deſtroyed the peaches, before they came to full maturity? In morals too, is not *the tree known by the fruit?* And cannot we eaſily diſtinguiſh between nature and accidnet, in the one caſe as well as in the other?

NOTE

NOTE [EE], p. 278.

IT is wisely ordained by nature, that private connexions should commonly prevail over universal views and considerations; otherwise our affections and actions would be dissipated and lost, for want of a proper limited object. Thus a small benefit done to ourselves, or our near friends, excites more lively sentiments of love and approbation than a great benefit done to a distant commonwealth: But still we know here, as in all the senses, to correct these inequalities by reflection, and retain a general standard of vice and virtue, founded chiefly on general usefulness.

NOTE [FF], p. 282.

ONE may venture to affirm, that there is no human creature, to whom the appearance of happiness (where envy or revenge has no place) does not give pleasure, that of misery, uneasiness. This seems inseparable from our make and constitution. But they are only the more generous minds, that are thence prompted to seek zealously the good of others, and to have a real passion for their welfare. With men of narrow and ungenerous spirits, this sympathy goes not beyond a slight feeling of the imagination, which serves only to excite sentiments of complacency or censure, and makes them apply to the object either honourable or dishonourable appellations. A griping miser, for instance, praises extremely *industry* and *frugality* even in others, and sets them, in his estimation, above all the other virtues. He knows the good that results from them, and feels that species of happiness with a more lively sympathy, than any other you could represent to him; though perhaps he would not part with a shilling to make the fortune of the industrious man, whom he praises so highly.

NOTE [GG], p. 293.

DIODORUS SICULUS, lib. xv. It may not be improper to give the character of Epaminondas, as drawn by the historian, in order to show the ideas of perfect merit, which prevailed in those ages. In other illustri-

ous

ous men, ſays he, you will obſerve, that each poſſeſſed ſome one ſhining quality, which was the foundation of his fame: In Epaminondas all the *virtues* are found united; force of body, eloquence of expreſſion, vigour of mind, contempt of riches, gentleneſs of diſpoſition, and *what is chiefly to be regarded*, courage and conduct in war.

NOTE [HH], p. 294.

ALL men are equally liable to pain and diſeaſe and ſickneſs; and may again recover health and eaſe. Theſe circumſtances, as they make no diſtinction between one man and other, are no ſource of pride or humility, regard or contempt. But comparing our own ſpecies to ſuperior ones, it is a very mortifying conſideration, that we ſhould all be ſo liable to diſeaſes and infirmities; and divines accordingly employ this topic, in order to depreſs ſelf-conceit and vanity. They would have more ſucceſs, if the common bent of our thoughts were not perpetually turned to compare ourſelves with others. The infirmities of old age are mortifying; becauſe a compariſon with the young may take place. The king's evil is induſtriouſly concealed, becauſe it affects others, and is often tranſmitted to poſterity. The caſe is nearly the ſame with ſuch diſeaſes as convey any nauſeous or frightful images; the epilepſy, for inſtance, ulcers, ſores, ſcabs, &c.

NOTE [II], p. 296.

THERE is ſomething extraordinary, and ſeemingly unaccountable in the operation of our paſſions, when we conſider the fortune and ſituation of others. Very often another's advancement and proſperity produces envy, which has a ſtrong mixture of hatred, and ariſes chiefly from the compariſon of ourſelves with the perſon. At the very ſame time, or at leaſt in very ſhort intervals, we may feel the paſſion of reſpect, which is a ſpecies of affection or good-will, with a mixture of humility. On the other hand, the misfortunes of our fellows often cauſe pity, which has in it a ſtrong mixture of good-will. This ſentiment of pity is nearly allied

allied to contempt, which is a ſpecies of diſlike, with a mixture of pride. I only point out the phænomena, as a ſubject of ſpeculation to ſuch as are curious with regard to moral enquiries. It is ſufficient for the preſent purpoſe to obſerve in general, that power and riches commonly cauſe reſpect, poverty and meanneſs contempt, though particular views and incidents may ſometimes raiſe the paſſions of envy and of pity.

NOTE [KK], p. 300.

THERE is no man, who, on particular occaſions, is not affected with all the diſagreeable paſſions, fear, anger, dejection, grief, melancholy, anxiety, &c. But theſe, ſo far as they are natural, and univerſal, make no difference between one man and another, and can never be the object of blame. It is only when the diſpoſition gives a *propenſity* to any of theſe diſagreeable paſſions, that they disfigure the character, and by giving uneaſineſs, convey the ſentiment of diſapprobation to the ſpectator.

NOTE [LL], p. 3·2.

TACIT. hiſt. lib. iii. The author entering upon the narration, ſays, *Laniata veſte, fœdum ſpectaculum ducebatur, multis increpantibus, nullo inlacrimante*: deformitas exitus miſericordiam abſtulerat. To enter thoroughly into this method of thinking, we muſt make allowance for the ancient maxims, that no one ought to prolong his life after it became diſhonourable; but, as he had always a right to diſpoſe of it, it then became a duty to part with it.

NOTE [MM], p. 303.

THE abſence of virtue may often be a vice; and that of the higheſt kind; as in the inſtance of ingratitude, as well as meanneſs. Where we expect a beauty, the diſappointment gives an uneaſy ſenſation, and produces a real deformity. An abjectneſs of character, likewiſe, is diſguſtful and

and contemptible in another view. Where a man has no ſenſe of value in himſelf, we are not likely to have any higher eſteem of him. And if the ſame perſon, who crouches to his ſuperiors, is inſolent to his inferiors (as often happens), this contrariety of behaviour, inſtead of correcting the former vice, aggravates it extremely by the addition of a vice ſtill more odious. See ſect. 8.

NOTE [NN], p. 326.

IT ſeems certain, both from reaſon and experience, that a rude, untaught ſavage regulates chiefly his love and hatred by the ideas of private utility and injury, and has but faint conceptions of a general rule or ſyſtem of behaviour. The man who ſtands oppoſite to him in battle, he hates heartily, not only for the preſent moment, which is almoſt unavoidable, but for ever after; nor is he ſatiſfied without the moſt extreme puniſhment and vengeance. But we, accuſtomed to ſociety, and to more enlarged reflections, conſider, that this man is ſerving his own country and community; that any man, in the ſame ſituation, would do the ſame; that we ourſelves, in like circumſtances, obſerve a like conduct; that, in general, human ſociety is beſt ſupported on ſuch maxims: And by theſe ſuppoſitions and views, we correct, in ſome meaſure, our ruder and narrower paſſions. And though much of our friendſhip and enmity be ſtill regulated by private conſiderations of benefit and harm, we pay, at leaſt, this homage to general rules, which we are accuſtomed to reſpect, that we commonly pervert our adverſary's conduct, by imputing malice or injuſtice to him, in order to give vent to thoſe paſſions, which ariſe from ſelf-love and private intereſt. When the heart is full of rage, it never wants pretences of this nature; though ſometimes as frivolous, as thoſe from which Horace, being almoſt cruſhed by the fall of a tree, affects to accuſe of parricide the firſt planter of it.

NOTE [OO], p. 352.

BENEVOLENCE naturally divides into two kinds, the *general* and the *particular*. The firſt is, where we have no friendſhip or connexion or eſteem for the perſon, but feel only a general ſympathy with him or a compaſſion for his pains, and a congratulation with his pleaſures. The other ſpecies of benevolence is founded on an opinion of virtue, on ſervices done us, or on ſome particular connexions. Both theſe ſentiments muſt be allowed real in human nature; but whether they will reſolve into ſome nice conſiderations of ſelf-love, is a queſtion more curious than important. The former ſentiment, to wit, that of general benevolence, or humanity, or ſympathy, we ſhall have occaſion frequently to treat of in the courſe of this enquiry; and I aſſume it as real, from general experience, without any other proof.

NOTE [PP], p. 361.

THIS theory concerning the origin of property, and conſequently of juſtice, is, in the main, the ſame with that hinted at and adopted by Grotius. "Hinc diſcimus, quæ "fuerit cauſa, ob quam a primæva communione rerum primo mobilium, deinde & immobilium diſceſſum eſt: nimirum quod cum non contenti homines veſci ſponte natis, "antra habitare, corpore aut nudo agere, aut corticibus arborum ferarumve pellibus veſtito, vitæ genus exquiſitus "delegiſſent, induſtria opus fuit, quam ſinguli rebus ſingulis adhiberent: Quo minus autem fructus in commune "conferrentur, primum obſtitit locorum, in quæ homines "diſceſſerunt, diſtantia, deinde juſtitiæ & amoris defectus, "per quem fiebat, ut nec in labore, nec in conſumptione, "fructuum, quæ debebat, æqualitas ſervaretur. Simul diſcimus, quomodo res in proprietatem iverint; non animi "actu ſolo, neque enim ſcire alii poterant, quid alii ſuum "eſſe vellent, ut eo abſtinerent, & idem velle plures poterant; ſed pacto quodam aut expreſſo, ut per diviſionem, "aut tacito, ut per occupationem." De jure belli & pacis. Lib. ii. cap. 2. § 2. art. 4, & 5.

NOTE

NOTE [QQ], p. 361.

NATURAL may be oppofed, either to what is *unufual*, *miraculous*, or *artificial*. In the two former fenfes, juftice and property are undoubtedly natural. But as they fuppofe reafon, forethought, defign, and a focial union and confederacy among men, perhaps, that epithet cannot ftrictly, in the laft fenfe, be applied to them. Had men lived without fociety, property had never been known, and neither juftice nor injuftice had ever exifted. But fociety among human creatures, had been impoffible, without reafon, and forethought. Inferior animals, that unite, are guided by inftinct, which fupplies the place of reafon. But all thefe difputes are merely verbal.

NOTE [RR], p. 363.

THAT there be a feparation or diftinction of poffeffions, and that this feparation be fteady and conftant; this is abfolutely required by the interefts of fociety, and hence the origin of juftice and property. What poffeffions are affigned to particular perfons; this is, generally fpeaking, pretty indifferent; and is often determined by very frivolous views and confiderations. We fhall mention a few particulars.

Were a fociety formed among feveral independent members, the moft obvious rule, which could be agreed on, would be to annex property to *prefent* poffeffion, and leave every one a right to what he at prefent enjoys. The relation of poffeffion, which takes place between the perfon and the object, naturally draws on the relation of property.

For a like reafon, occupation or firft poffeffion becomes the foundation of property.

Where a man beftows labour and induftry upon any object, which before belonged to no body; as in cutting down and fhaping a tree, in cultivating a field, &c. the alterations, which he produces, caufes a relation between him and the object, and naturally engages us to annex it to him by the new relation of property. This caufe here concurs with the public

public utility, which consists in the encouragement given to industry and labour.

Perhaps too, private humanity towards the possessor, concurs, in this instance, with the other motives, and engages us to leave with him what he has acquired by his sweat and labour; and what he has flattered himself in the constant enjoyment of. For though private humanity can, by no means, be the origin of justice; since the latter virtue so often contradicts the former; yet when the rule of separate and constant possession is once formed by the indispensable necessities of society, private humanity, and an aversion to the doing a hardship to another, may, in a particular instance, give rise to a particular rule of property.

I am much inclined to think, that the right of succession or inheritance much depends on those connexions of the imagination, and that the relation to a former proprietor begetting a relation to the object, is the cause why the property is transferred to a man after the death of his kinsman. It is true; industry is more encouraged by the transference of possession to children or near relations: But this consideration will only have place in a cultivated society; whereas the right of succession is regarded even among the greatest Barbarians.

Acquisition of property by *accession* can be explained no way but by having recourse to the relations and connexions of the imagination.

The property of rivers, by the laws of most nations, and by the natural turn of our thought, is attributed to the proprietors of their banks, excepting such vast rivers as the Rhine or the Danube, which seem too large to follow as an accession to the property of the neighbouring fields. Yet even these rivers are considered as the property of that nation, through whose dominions they run; the idea of a nation being of a suitable bulk to correspond with them, and bear them such a relation in the fancy.

The accessions, which are made to land, bordering upon rivers, follow the land, say the civilians, provided it be made by what they call *alluvion*, that is, insensibly and imperceptibly; which are circumstances, that assist the imagination in the conjunction.

Where

Where there is any conſiderable portion torn at once from one bank and added to another, it becomes not *his* property, whoſe land it falls on, till it unite with the land, and till the trees and plants have ſpread their roots into both. Before that, the thought does not ſufficiently join them.

In ſhort, we muſt ever diſtinguiſh between the neceſſity of a ſeparation and conſtancy in men's poſſeſſion, and the rules, which aſſign particular objects to particular perſons. The firſt neceſſity is obvious, ſtrong, and invincible: The latter may depend on a public utility more light and frivolous, on the ſentiment of private humanity and averſion to private hardſhip, on poſitive laws, on precedents, analogies, and very fine connexions and turns of the imagination.

NOTE [SS], p. 370.

THE term, pride, is commonly taken in a bad ſenſe; but this ſentiment ſeems indifferent, and may be either good or bad, according as it is well or ill founded, and according to the other circumſtances which accompany it. The French expreſs this ſentiment by the term, *amour propre*, but as they alſo expreſs ſelf-love as well as vanity, by the ſame term, there ariſes thence a great confuſion in Rochefoucault, and many of their moral writers.

NOTE [TT], p. 371.

LOVE and eſteem are nearly the ſame paſſion, and ariſe from ſimilar cauſes. The qualities, which produce both, are ſuch as communicate pleaſure. But where this pleaſure is ſevere and ſerious; or where its object is great, and makes a ſtrong impreſſion, or where it produces any degree of humility and awe: In all theſe caſes, the paſſion, which ariſes from the pleaſure, is more properly denominated eſteem than love. Benevolence attends both: But is connected with love in a more eminent degree. There ſeems to be ſtill a ſtronger mixture of pride in contempt than of humility in eſteem;

esteem; and the reason would not be difficult to one, who studied accurately the passions. All these various mixtures and compositions and appearances of sentiment form a very curious subject of speculation, but are wide of our present purpose. Throughout this enquiry, we always consider in general, what qualities are a subject of praise or of censure, without entering into all the minute differences of sentiment, which they excite. It is evident, that whatever is contemned, is also disliked, as well as what is hated; and we here endeavour to take objects, according to their most simple views and appearances. These sciences are too apt to appear abstract to common readers, even with all the precautions which we can take to clear them from superfluous speculations, and bring them down to every capacity.

NOTE [UU], p. 371.

THE following passage of Cicero is worth quoting, as being the most clear and express to our purpose, that any thing can be imagined, and, in a dispute, which is chiefly verbal, must, on account of the author, carry an authority, from which there can be no appeal.

"Virtus autem, quæ est per se ipsa laudabilis, et sine qua nihil laudari potest, tamen habet plures partes, quarum alia est aliâ ad laudationem aptior. Sunt enim aliæ virtutes, quæ videntur in moribus hominum, et quadam comitate ac beneficentia positæ: aliæ quæ in ingenii aliqua facultate, aut animi magnitudine ac robore. Nam clementia, justitia, benignitas, fides, fortitudo in periculis communibus, jucunda est auditu in laudationibus. Omnes enim hæ virtutes non tam ipsis, qui eas in se habent, quam generi hominum fructuosæ putantur. Sapientia et magnitudo animi, qua omnes res humanæ, tenues et pro nihilo putantur; et in cogitando vis quædam ingenii, et ipsa eloquentia admirationis habet non minus, jucunditatis minus. Ipsos enim magis videtur, quos laudamus, quam illos, apud quos laudamus, ornare ac tueri: sed tamen in laudenda jungenda sunt etiam hæc genera virtutum. Ferunt enim aures hominum, cum illa quæ

"jucunda

" jucunda et grata, tum etiam illa, quæ mirabilia ſunt in " virtute, laudari." *De orat. lib.* ii. *cap.* 89.

I ſuppoſe, if Cicero were now alive, it would be found difficult to fetter his moral ſentiments by narrow ſyſtems; or perſuade him, that no qualities were to be admitted as *virtues*, or acknowledged to be a part of *perſonal merit*, but what were recommended by *The Whole Duty of Man*.

NOTE [XX], p. 394.

DURING the times of the emperors, the Romans ſeem to have been more given to intrigues and gallantry han the Engliſh are at preſent: And the women of condition, in order to retain their lovers, endeavoured to fix a name of reproach on thoſe who were addicted to wenching and low amours. They were called Ancillarioli. See Seneca de beneficiis. Lib. i. cap. 9. See alſo Martial, lib. xii. epig. 58.

NOTE [YY], p. 409.

" FRAGILIS & laborioſa mortalitas in partes iſta digeſ" ſit, infirmitatis ſuæ memor, ut portionibus quiſquis co" leret, quo maxime indigeret." Plin. lib. ii. cap. 7. So early as Heſiod's time there were 30,000 deities. *Oper. & Dier.* lib. i. ver. 250. But the taſk to be performed by theſe ſeems ſtill too great for their number. The provinces of the deities were ſo ſubdivided, that there was even a god of *Sneezing*. See Ariſt. *Probl.* ſect. 33. cap. 7. The province of copulation, ſuitably to the importance and dignity of it, was divided among ſeveral deities.

NOTE [ZZ], p. 426.

IT will be eaſy to give a reaſon, why Thales, Anaximander, and thoſe early philoſophers, who really were atheiſts, might be very orthodox in the pagan creed; and why Anaxagoras and Socrates, though real theiſts, muſt naturally, in ancient times, be eſteemed impious. The blind, unguided powers of nature, if they could produce men, might alſo produce ſuch beings as Jupiter and Neptune,

tune, who being the moſt powerful, intelligent exiſtences in the world, would be proper objects of worſhip. But where a ſupreme intelligence, the firſt cauſe of all, is admitted, theſe capricious beings, if they exiſt at all, muſt appear very ſubordinate and dependent, and conſequently be excluded from the rank of deities. Plato (de leg. lib. x.) aſſigns this reaſon for the imputation thrown on Anaxagoras, namely his denying the divinity of the ſtars, planets, and other created objects.

NOTE [AAA], p. 436.

VERRIUS Flaccus, cited by Pliny, lib. xxviii. cap. 2. affirmed, that it was uſual with the Romans, before they laid ſiege to any town, to invocate the tutelar deity of the place, and by promiſing him greater honours than thoſe he at preſent enjoyed, bribe him to betray his old friends and votaries. The name of the tutelar deity of Rome was for this reaſon kept a moſt religious myſtery; leſt the enemies of the republic ſhould be able, in the ſame manner, to draw him over to their ſervice. For without the name, they thought, nothing of that kind could be practiſed. Pliny ſays, that the common form of invocation was preſerved to his time in the ritual of the pontifs. And Macrobius has tranſmitted a copy of it from the ſecret things of Sammonicus Serenus.

NOTE [BBB], p. 439.

MOST nations have fallen into this guilt of human ſacrifices; though, perhaps, that impious ſuperſtition has never prevailed very much in any civilized nation, unleſs we except the Carthaginians. For the Tyrians ſoon aboliſhed it. A ſacrifice is conceived as a preſent; and any preſent is delivered to their deity by deſtroying it and rendering it uſeleſs to men; by burning what is ſolid, pouring out the liquid, and killing the animate. For want of a better way of doing him ſervice, we do ourſelves an injury; and fancy that we thereby expreſs, at leaſt, the heartineſs of our good-will and adoration. Thus our mercenary devotion deceives ourſelves, and imagines it deceives the deity.

NOTE

NOTE [CCC], p. 447.

IT is ſtrange that the Egyptian religion, though ſo abſurd, ſhould yet have borne ſo great a reſemblance to the Jewiſh, that ancient writers even of the greateſt genius were not able to obſerve any difference between them. For it is remarkable that both Tacitus and Suetonius, when they mention that decree of the ſenate, under Tiberius, by which the Egyptian and Jewiſh proſelytes were baniſhed from Rome, expreſsly treat theſe religions as the ſame; and it appears, that even the decree itſelf was founded on that ſuppoſition. " Actum & de ſacris Ægyptiis, Judaicisque pellendis; " factumque patrum conſultum, ut quatuor millia liber- " tini generis *ea ſuperſtitione* infecta, quîs idonea ætas, " in inſulam Sardiniam veherentur, coercendis illic " latrociniis; & ſi ob gravitatem cœli interiſſent, *vile* " *damnum*: Ceteri cederent Italia, niſi certam ante diem " profanos ritus exuiſſent." Tacit. ann. lib. ii. c. 85. " Externas cæremonias, Ægyptios, Judaicoſque ritus " compeſcuit; coactus qui *ſuperſtitione ea* tenebantur, " religioſas veſtes cum inſtrumento omni comburere, " &c." Sueton. Tiber. c. 36. Theſe wiſe heathens, obſerving ſomething in the general air, and genius, and ſpirit of the two religions to be the ſame, eſteemed the differences of their dogmas too frivolous to deſerve any attention.

NOTE [DDD], p. 455.

XENOPHON's conduct, as related by himſelf, is, at once, an inconteſtable proof of the general credulity of mankind in thoſe ages, and the incoherencies, in all ages, of men's opinions in religious matters. That great captain and philoſopher, the diſciple of Socrates, and one who has delivered ſome of the moſt refined ſentiments with regard to a deity, gave all the following marks of vulgar, pagan ſuperſtition. By Socrates's advice, he conſulted the oracle of Delphi, before he would engage in the expedition of Cyrus. De exped. lib. iii. p. 294. ex edit. Leuncl. Sees a dream the night after the generals were ſeized; which he pays great regard

gard to, but thinks ambiguous. Id. p. 295. He and the whole army regard ſneezing as a very lucky omen. Id. p. 300. Has another dream, when he comes to the river Centrites, which his fellow-general, Chiroſophus, alſo pays great regard to. Id. lib. iv. p. 323. The Greeks, ſuffering from a cold north wind, ſacrifice to it; and the hiſtorian obſerves, that it immediately abated. Id. p. 329. Xenophon conſults the ſacrifices in ſecret, before he would form any reſolution with himſelf about ſettling a colony. Lib. v. p. 359. He was himſelf a very ſkilful augur. Id. p. 361. Is determined by the victims to refuſe the ſole command of the army which was offered him. Lib. vi. p. 273. Cleander, the Spartan, though very deſirous of it, refuſes it for the ſame reaſon. Id. p. 392. Xenophon mentions an old dream with the interpretation given him, when he firſt joined Cyrus, p. 373. Mentions alſo the place of Hercules's deſcent into hell as believing it, and ſays the marks of it are ſtill remaining. Id. p. 375. Had almoſt ſtarved the army, rather than lead them to the field againſt the auſpices. Id. p. 382, 383. His friend, Euclides, the augur, would not believe that he had brought no money from the expedition; till he (Euclides) ſacrificed, and then he ſaw the matter clearly in the Exta. Lib. vii. p. 425. The ſame philoſopher, propoſing a project of mines for the encreaſe of the Athenian revenues, adviſes them firſt to conſult the oracle. De rat. red. p. 392. That all this devotion was not a farce, in order to ſerve a political purpoſe, appears both from the facts themſelves, and from the genius of that age, when little or nothing could be gained by hypocriſy. Beſides, Xenophon, as appears from his Memorabilia, was a kind of heretic in thoſe times, which no political devotee ever is. It is for the ſame reaſon, I maintain, that Newton, Locke, Clarke, &c. being *Arians* or *Socinians*, were very ſincere in the creed they profeſſed: And I always oppoſe this argument to ſome libertines, who will needs have it, that it was impoſſible but that theſe philoſophers muſt have been hypocrites.

NOTE [EEE], p. 460.

BACCHUS, a divine being, is repreſented by the heathen mythology as the inventor of dancing and the theatre. Plays were anciently even a part of public worſhip on the moſt ſolemn occaſions, and often employed in times of peſtilence, to appeaſe the offended deities. But they have been zealouſly proſcribed by the godly in later ages; and the play-houſe, according to a learned divine, is the porch of hell.

But in order to ſhow more evidently, that it is poſſible for a religion to repreſent the divinity in ſtill a more immoral and unamiable light than he was pictured by the ancients, we ſhall cite a long paſſage from an author of taſte and imagination, who was ſurely no enemy to Chriſtianity. It is the Chevalier Ramſay, a writer, who had ſo laudable an inclination to be orthodox, that his reaſon never found any difficulty, even in the doctrines which free-thinkers ſcruple the moſt, the trinity, incarnation, and ſatisfaction: His humanity alone, of which he ſeems to have had a great ſtock, rebelled againſt the doctrines of eternal reprobation and predeſtination. He expreſſes himſelf thus: ‘What ſtrange ideas,’ ſays he, ‘would an Indian or ‘a Chineſe philoſopher have of our holy religion, if ‘they judged by the ſchemes given of it by our modern ‘free-thinkers, and phariſaical doctors of all ſects? ‘According to the odious and too *vulgar* ſyſtem of ‘theſe incredulous ſcoffers and credulous ſcribblers, “The God of the Jews is a moſt cruel, unjuſt, partial, and fantaſtical being. He created, about 6000 “years ago, a man and a woman, and placed them “in a fine garden of Aſia, of which there are no remains. This garden was furniſhed with all ſorts of “trees, fountains, and flowers. He allowed them the “uſe of all the fruits of this beautiful garden, except “one, that was planted in the midſt thereof, and that “had in it a ſecret virtue of preſerving them in continual health and vigour of body and mind, of exalting their natural powers and making them wiſe. “The devil entered into the body of a ſerpent, and “ſolicited the firſt woman to eat of this forbidden “fruit; ſhe engaged her huſband to do the ſame. “To puniſh this ſlight curioſity and natural deſire of “life and knowledge, God not only threw our firſt “parents

"parents out of paradiſe, but he condemned all their "poſterity to temporal miſery, and the greateſt part "of them to eternal pains, though the ſouls of theſe "innocent children have no more relation to that of "Adam than to thoſe of Nero and Mahomet; ſince, "according to the ſcholaſtic drivellers, fabuliſts, and "mythologiſts, all ſouls are created pure, and infuſed "immediately into mortal bodies, ſo ſoon as the fœtus "is formed. To accompliſh the barbarous, partial de-"cree of predeſtination and reprobation, God abandon-"ed all nations to darkneſs, idolatry, and ſuperſtiti-"on, without any ſaving knowledge or ſalutary gra-"ces; unleſs it was one particular nation, whom he "choſe as his peculiar people. This choſen nation "was, however, the moſt ſtupid, ungrateful, rebellious "and perfidious of all nations. After God had thus "kept the far greater part of all the human ſpecies, "during near 4000 years, in a reprobate ſtate, he "changed all of a ſudden, and took a fancy for other "nations beſide the Jews. Then he ſent his only be-"gotten Son to the world, under a human form, to "appeaſe his wrath, ſatisfy his vindictive juſtice, and "die for the pardon of ſin. Very few nations, how-"ever, have heard of this goſpel; and all the reſt, "though left in invincible ignorance, are damned with-"out exception, or any poſſibility of remiſſion. The "greateſt part of thoſe who have heard of it, have "changed only ſome ſpeculative notions about God, "and ſome external forms in worſhip: For, in other "reſpects, the bulk of Chriſtians have continued as "corrupt as the reſt of mankind in their morals; "yea, ſo much the more perverſe and criminal, "that their lights were greater. Unleſs it be a "very ſmall ſelect number, all other Chriſtians, like "the pagans, will be for ever damned; the great ſa-"crifice offered up for them will become void and of "no effect; God will take delight for ever, in their "torments and blaſphemies; and though he can, by "one *fiat* change their hearts, yet they will remain "for ever unconverted and unconvertible, becauſe he "will be for ever unappeaſable and irreconcileable. It "is true, that all this makes God odious, a hater of "ſouls, rather than a lover of them; a cruel, vin-

"dictive

" dictive tyrant, an impotent or a wrathful dæmon, " rather than an all-powerful, beneficent father of " ſpirits: Yet all this is a myſtery. He has ſecret " reaſons for his conduct, that are impenetrable; and " though he appears unjuſt and barbarous, yet we " muſt believe the contrary, becauſe what is injuſtice, " crime, cruelty, and the blackeſt malice in us, is in " him juſtice, mercy, and ſovereign goodneſs." Thus ' the incredulous free-thinkers, the judaizing Chriſtians, ' and the fataliſtic doctors have disfigured and diſhonoured ' the ſublime myſteries of our holy faith; thus they ' have confounded the nature of good and evil; trans- ' formed the moſt monſtrous paſſions into divine at- ' tributes, and ſurpaſſed the pagans in blaſphemy, by ' aſcribing to the eternal nature, as perfections, what ' makes the moſt horrid crimes againſt men. The ' groſſer pagans contented themſelves with divinizing ' luſt, inceſt, and adultery; but the predeſtinarian ' doctors have divinized cruelty, wrath, fury, vengeance, ' and all the blackeſt vices.' See the Chevalier Ramſay's philoſophical principles of natural and revealed religion, Part II. p. 401.

The ſame author aſſerts, in other places, that the *Arminian* and *Moliniſt* ſchemes ſerve very little to mend the matter: And having thus thrown himſelf out of all received ſects of Chriſtianity, he is obliged to advance a ſyſtem of his own, which is a kind of *Origeniſm*, and ſuppoſes the pre-exiſtence of the ſouls both of men and beaſts, and the eternal ſalvation and converſion of all men, beaſts, and devils. But this notion, being quite peculiar to himſelf, we need not treat of. I thought the opinions of this ingenious author very curious; but I pretend not to warrant the juſtneſs of them.

INDEX.

*** The *Numeral Letters* refer to the Volume, and the *Figures* to the Page.

A.

ABATEMENT, not the natural Conſequence of Polytheiſm, ii. 440.
Abſtraction, what, ii. 485, *Note* [P].
Abſurdity, not always the greateſt in Polytheiſm, ii. 442.
———, greedily coveted by popular Religions, ii. 443.
Acheans, employed Force in forming their League, i. 479.
———, their Number, i. 449,
Addiſon quoted, i. 93. 207. ii. 185.
Æſchynes quoted, i. 341. 445.
Æſchynes Socraticus quoted, ii. 374.
Ætolians, their Number, i. 449.
Agathocles, the Tyrant, his Cruelty, i. 425. 558, *Note* [CC]
Agreeableneſs, a Source of Merit, ii. 299.
———, to Ourſelf, ibid. *&c.*
———, to Others, ii. 311, *&c.*
Agriculture, how beſt encouraged, i. 276, 277. 434, 435.
Alcoran, its Ethics, i. 243.
Alexander the Impoſtor of Lucian, his Artifice, ii. 128.
Alexander the Great, his Saying to Parmenio, ii. 301.
———, his Toleration, ii. 438.
———, his Emulation of Bacchus, ii. 441.
Alexandria, its Size and Numbers of its Inhabitants, i. 453.
Allegiance, its Obligation, whence, i. 487. ii. 253.
Allegory has naturally place in Polytheiſm, ii. 422.
Anacreon quoted, ii. 390.
Analogies, and ſometimes ſlight, have Influence in Juriſprudence, ii. 244, 362.
Anaxagoras, the firſt Theiſt, and the firſt accuſed of Atheiſm, ii. 503, *Note* [ZZ].
Ancillarioli, what, ii. 503, *Note* [XX].
Angels, modern, equivalent to the Deities of the Philoſophers, ii. 421.

Animals,

Animals, their Reaſon, ii. 111, &c.
Antioch, its Size, i. 453.
Antipater, the Cyreniac, his Saying, i. 188.
Appian Alexandrinus quoted, i. 343. 393. 413. 419. 422. 425, 429. 440. 463. ii. 382.
Arnobius quoted, ii. 417. 425.
Arioſto, his Character, i. 246, quoted, 94.
Ariſtides the Sophiſt quoted, i. 562, *Note* [KK].
Ariſtocracy, Poliſh, Venetian, in what reſpects different, i. 15, 16.
Ariſtophanes not impious according to the Ideas of Antiquity, ii. 417.
——— quoted, i. 408.
Ariſtotle quoted, i. 227. 408. 446. 456. ii. 371. 503, *Note* [YY].
Armſtrong, Dr. quoted, ii. 370.
Arrian quoted, i. 132, 369, 432. ii. 438. 441.
Atheiſm, whether poſſible, ii. 159.
Athenæus quoted, i. 443, 444, 446.
Athens, i. 99. 273. 341. 428. 443, 444, 446. 478.
Athenians, on what they chiefly valued themſelves, ii. 308.
Athenian Man of Merit, ii. 377, &c.
Auguſtine (Saint) his Dogmatiſm, ii. 449.
Auguſtus, his Impiety mixed with Superſtition, ii. 418.
———, his Superſtition, ii. 450.
———, his Age compared with that of Camillus, i. 274.
Aunoi, Madame, quoted, i. 200.
Aurelius, Marcus, his Theiſm, ii. 421. his Superſtition, 455.
Auſtria, Houſe of, Cauſes of its Decay, i. 358.
Authority of Teachers, uſeful to check it, i. 126.

B

BACON, quoted, i. 56. 95. 223. 282. ii. 138. 267. 427.
Balance of Power, i. 32. 353, &c.—Of Trade, i. 327, &c. —Of Property, i. 32. 47.
Banks and Paper Credit, whether advantageous, i. 301. 336.
Barbarity an Attribute of the Deity in popular Religions, ii. 465.
Bartoli's Plans of ancient Buildings, i. 451.
Bayle quoted, ii. 441. 484.
Beauty, why the object of Pride, ii. 189.
Belief, what, ii. 52, &c.
Bellarmine, Cardinal, his Saying, ii. 441.
Benevolence, i. 89. diſintereſted zeal, ii. 349. &c. its kinds, 351.

351. a Virtue, 222. from its Utility, 225. from its Agreeablenefs, 307.
Berkeley, Dr. a real Sceptic, ii. 484, *Note* [N], quoted, i. 223.
Berne, Canton of, its Treafure, i. 342.
Bentivoglio quoted, i. 225.
Boccace quoted, i. 190.
Boileau quoted, ii. 302.
Bolingbroke quoted, i. 25. 44.
Boulainvilliers quoted, i. 571. ii. 430.
Br[illegible], his Saying, ii. 441.
Brumoy, Pere, quoted, ii. 417.

C.

CÆSAR quoted, i. 419. 462, 463. 550, *Note* [K]. ii. 416.
——— his Account of the Numbers flaughtered in his Wars, i. 560, *Note* [FF].
Cambyfes, his Extravagance, ii. 444.
Capitolinus quoted, i. 491.
Caprice, an Attribute of the Deity in popular Religions, ii. 466.
Carlifle, Earl of, quoted, i. 138.
Cartes, Des, quoted, i. 259. ii. 475, *Note* [D].
Carthage, its Size and Number of its Inhabitants, i. 456.
Carthaginians, their human Sacrifices, ii. 504, *Note* [BBB].
Catholics, Roman, Genius of their Religion, i. 80.
——————— led into Abfurdities, ii. 446.
Cato de re ruftica, quoted, i. 411.
Cato of Utica, his Speech to Cæfar, i. 289.
Caufe and Effect its Ideas, whence, ii. 28, 29, &c. Its Definition, 82, 477, *Note* [G].
Caufes moral, how far they contribute to national Characters, i. 213.
——— Phyfical, how far, i. 222.
Caufation, a Reafon of Affociation, ii. 24. 56, &c.
Cavalier Party, i. 69.
Cervantes, his Merit, i. 207, quoted, 250.
Chance, what, ii. 62. Its [illegible]e in Society, i. 117.
[illegible] i. 2[illegible]

Cicero quoted, i. 18. 97. 102. 104. 106. 188. 364. 404. 424. 433. 442. 452. 465. 551, *Note* [O]. ii. 56. 223. 227. 371. 391. 448, 449. 456. 465.
City, Reafons which limit the Greatnefs of every City, i. 456.
Cleanlinefs, its Merit, whence, ii. 317.
Clergy, why no Friends to Liberty, i. 66.
Cold, greater in ancient times, i. 457, 458.
Colonefi and Orfini, Parties in modern Rome, i. 57.
Columella quoted, i. 325. 403. 407, 412, 413. 460. 465. 554, *Note* [T].
Comitia centuriata & tributa, their different Powers, i. 392. *&c.*
Commerce, its Advantages, i. 272. foreign, its Advantages, 279, 280.
Commonwealth, perfect, Idea of it, i. 523, *&c.*
Companionable Qualities, ii. 312, *&c.*
Comparifon its Effect, i. 84. neceffary to forming the Tafte, 254.
Comte, Pere le, quoted, ii. 416.
Condé, Prince of, a Saying of his, i. 124.
Confucius, his Difciples Deifts, i. 79.
Congreve, his Character, i. 209.
Conjunction frequent, conftant, the only circumftance from which we know Caufe and Effect, ii. 75. 79. 83. &c.
Connexion neceffary, our Idea of it, ii. 65, &c.
Conftantine, Emperor, his Innovation, i. 366.
Conftitution, Britifh, i. 25. 49, &c.
Contiguity, a Reafon of Affociation, ii. 24. 54.
Contract, Original, i. 471, &c.
Conventions, whether the Source of Juftice, ii. 360, &c.
Convictions ftrongeft, but not more general, in Theifm, ii. 444, 445.
Corn diftributed in Rome, i. 451, 452.
Corneille, his Character, i. 209.
Corpus juris civilis quoted, i. 423. 556, *Note* [Z].
Courage, how far national, i. 226.
——— its Merit, whence, ii. 303.
Country Party, i. 27. 66, 67.
Court Party, i. 27. 66, 67.
Creation or Formation of the World enters not into the primitive Religion, ii. 4

D

DARIUS Hystaspes records his Ability in Drinking on his Tombstone, i. 228.
Datames, the only Barbarian a General, i. 292.
Decency, its Merit, whence, ii. 317.
Debt, public, its Advantages, i. 372.
——— its Disadvantages, i. 373, 374.
Deists united with the Independents, i. 80.
Delicacy of Passion, how hurtful, i. 3, &c.
——— of Taste, how advantageous, i. 3, 4, 5. what it is, 249. whence its Merit, ii. 309.
Democracy without a Representative, hurtful, i. 14, 15.
Demosthenes his Character, i. 109. quoted, i. 109. 341. 354. 388. 390. 404. 408. 418. 432. 445. 559, *Note* [CC]. 561, *Note* [HH]. ii. 2[illegible]3. 393.
Desire, Aversion, ii. 192.
Diodorus Siculus his Character, i. 560, *Note* [EE].
——— Superstitious, yet not a Theist, ii. 419.
——— Quoted, i. 227. 274. 341. 355. 419, 420. 426. 427. 429. 431, 432, 434. 438. 441. 443. 447. 449. 453. 458. 463. 469. 542, *Note* [A]. 543, *Note* [D]. 568, *Note* [QQ]. ii. 227. 414. 416. 419. 462. 465.
Diogenes Laertius quoted, i. 438. ii. 425.
Diogenes, the Cynic, his Character, ii. 396, 397.
Dion Cassius quoted, i. 324.
Dionysius Halycarnassæus quoted, i. 205. 549, *Note* [I]. 429. 450. ii. 412. 421.
Dionysius the Tyrant, his Massacres, i. 426.
——— his Army, i. 274. 441.
Discretion, its Merit, whence, ii. 306.
Division of Property, useful, i. 420.
Domestic Situation of Ancients and Moderns, i. 401, 402.
Dorians and Ionians, i. 226.
Dryden quoted, i. 215. ii. 448.
Dubos, Abbe, quoted, i. 232. 333. 457. 466.

E

ECLECTICS, [illegible] i. 127.
Egypt[illegible]
[illegible]yptian R[illegible]
———
Elizabe[illegible]
ii. [illegible]

Empires, great, deſtructive, i. 361.
Energy, its Idea, ii. 67, 68.
Engliſh, their national Character, whence, i. 221.
Enthuſiaſm, defended and explained, i. 75, &c.
Envy, whence, ii. 200.
Epaminondas, his Character, ii, 494, *Note* [GG].
Epictetus, his Idea of Virtue, ii. 372. his Superſtition, ii. 455.
Epicurus, his Apology, ii. 181, &c.
——— why he took himſelf to Philoſophy, ii. 420.
Edicurean, i. 143.
Ergaſtula, very frequent anciently, i. 403.
Euclid treats not of the Beauty of the Circle, i. 178.
Euripides quoted, ii. 413.
Europe, its Advantages from its Situation, i. 127.
Evidence, natural and moral, of the ſame Kind, ii. 95.
Exchange helps to keep the Balance of Trade, i. 331.
Exchange, difficult to know, whether for or againſt a Nation, i. 327.
Exiles in Greece, how numerous, i. 426.
Experience, Source of all our Reaſoning with regard to Fact, ii. 30, &c.
——— why we reaſon from Experience, ii. 36, 37. 93.
——— often the ſame with what we call Reaſon, ii. 472, *Note* [B].
Expoſing Children, i. 415. approved by Seneca, ibid.

F

FACT, Matters of, one Object of Reaſon, ii. 27, 28.
Factions, violent and bloody, among the Ancients, i. 424.
Fairies modern, equivalent to the vulgar Deities of Antiquity, ii. 415.
Fame, why deſired, ii. 191.
Fenelon, his Ethics, i. 242.
Flattery, its Influence in Religion, ii. 428.
Florus quoted, i. 414.
Flux and Reflux of Theiſm and Polytheiſm, ii. 434, &c.
Fontaine, la, quoted, ii. 394.
Fontenelle, Cenſure of his Paſtorals, i. 21[illegible]
——— quoted, i. 6, 1[illegible] [illegible] 7.
[illegible] 12.

G.

GALLANTRY of Civility, i. 135.
——— of Intrigues, ii. 394.
Gamesters and Sailors why superstitious, ii. 412.
Gaul, Number of its Inhabitants, i. 463.
Gee, Mr. quoted, i. 328.
General Rules, their Influence, ii. 198. 255.
Genoa, its Government and Bank, i. 22.
Getes immortal, their Faith, ii. 433.
Golden Age not susceptible of Justice, ii. 237.
Good Sense, how far essential to Taste, i. 256.
Gorgias Leontinus, his Eloquence, i. 543, *Note* [D].
Government, Origin of, i. 35. Perpetual struggle between Authority and Liberty in all Governments, 38. Violent Innovations dangerous to Government, 483. Sometimes prove happy in the Issue, instanced in the reign of Henry VIII. and Charles I. 484.
Greece, its Advantages from its Situation, i. 127.
——— its whole military Force, i. 450.
——— Numbers of its Inhabitants, i. 461.
Grotius quoted, ii. 498, *Note* [PP].
Guelf and Ghibelline Parties, i. 58.
Guicciardin quoted, i. 290. ii. 373.
Gustavus Vaza, i. 67.

H.

HARDOUIN, Pere, quoted, i. 563.
Harrington, his Oceana, censured, i. 525.
——— quoted, i. 47. 95. 524.
Heliogabalus, a conic Stone, ii. 425.
Henry IV. of France, his Character, ii. 308.
——— a Saying of his, i. 554, *Note* [S].
Henry the IVth and VIIth of England their Title, i. 479.
Helvetia, its Inhabitants, i. 464.
Hereditary Right, how important, i. 511.
Heresy, Appellation rests commonly on the Side of Reason: Examples, ii. 443.
Hero-worship, ii. 423.
He… dian qu…

Hiero, King of Syracuse, his Policy, i. 357.
Hirtius quoted, i. 425.
Homer, his Character, i. 248. his Ethics, i. 242. ii. 304. Inconsistency of his Theology, ii. 431. quoted, ii. 417. 423. 431.
Homer and Hesiod, canonical Books of ancient Paganism, ii. 418.
Honesty the best Policy, ii. 334.
Hope and Fear defended, ii. 178, 179.
Horace quoted, i. 95. 119. 132. 139. 208. 263. 407. 457. 566, *Note* [OO]. ii. 182. 268. 374. 390.
Hostis, its Signification in old Latin, i. 551, *Note* [O].
Human Life, general Idea of it, i. 193.
—— Nature, its Dignity, i. 83.
Humility, its Causes, ii. 186.
Husbandmen, what Proportion they bear to Manufacturers, i. 272.
Hutchinson, Mr. quoted, i. 381.
Hyde de Religione veterum Persarum, quoted, ii. 433. 438.

I.

JANSENISTS, their Genius, i. 80. ii. 481, 482.
Ice, Reports of it not credible to an Indian, ii. 122.
Ideas, their Association, ii. 23, 24, &c. 54.
—— their Origin, ii. 17, &c.
Idolatry, its Origin from Polytheism, ii. 423.
Jesuits, their Refinement, ii. 496.
Jews, their national Character, whence, ii. 505, *Note* [CCC].
—— Reason of their Insurrection, ii. 450.
Jewish Religion and Egyptian resembling, ii. 505, *Note* [CCC].
Ignorance of Causes the Origin of Polytheism, ii. 411.
Immaculate Conception, a popular Opinion, ii. 430.
Immortality of the Soul, on what founded, ii. 151.
Impiety of popular Religions, ii. 457.
Impressions, what, ii. 18.
Impotence and Barrenness, ii. 293.
Incest, whence its Crime, ii. 256.
Independents, their Genius, i. 78.
Indians justly incredulous with regard to Ice, ii. 122.

Josephus quoted, i. 566, *Note* [NN]. 568, *Note* [QQ].
Joy, Grief, explained, ii. 177.
Iphicrates, a Saying of his, ii. 315.
Isocrates quoted, i. 408. 427, 428.
Irish, their Idea of Merit, ii. 304.
Italians, Cause of their Effeminacy, i. 292.
Italy ancient and modern, Number of its Inhabitants, i. 465.
Julian quoted, i. 440.
Justice, Source of its Merit, ii. 232. farther explained, 357.
Justin quoted. i. 450. 465.
Justinian quoted, i. 139.
Juvenal quoted, i. 132. 224. 413. 458. 466. ii. 224. 456.

L.

LAMPRIDIUS quoted, i. 437.
Laws of the twelve Tables, i. 122.
Laws of Justice, whence derived, ii. 241.
—— of Nature, ii. 253.
Louis XIV. Numbers of his armies, i. 290.
Liberty and Necessity, a Dispute of Words, ii. 86.
Liberty, civil, its advantages, i. 91, &c. 119, 120, 121.
Liberty of the Press, why peculiar to Great Britain, i. 9, 10, 11, 12.
Lipsius, Justus, quoted, i. 410.
Livy, a sincere Religionist, ii. 454. quoted, i. 23. 57. 220. 274. 342. 356. 419. 426. 435. ii. 372. 461.
Locke, (Mr.) quoted, i. 95. 493. ii. 61. 69. 184. 471, *Note* [A]. 475, *Note* [D].
Longinus quoted, i. 104. 108. ii. 301. 417.
Louvestein Party in Holland, i. 67.
Love and Hatred. whence derived, ii. 199.
Lucan quoted, i. 414.
Lucian quoted, i. 189. 543, *Note* [Z]. 559, *Note* [HH]. ii. 128. 141. 290. 386. 416. 454. 459, 460.
Lucretius, his Character, i. 209. quoted, ii. 134. 424.
Luxury, its different Senses, i. 285. its Advantages, 287, 288. its Disadvantages, 296, 297.
Luxurious Ages most happy, i. 286. 289. most virtuous, ibid.
Lysias, Genius of his Eloquence, i. 112. quoted, i. 424, 425. 432. 439. 442. 462. [illegible]9. ii. [illegible] 443. 44[illegible]

M.

MACHIAVEL, [illegible]s, [illegible]ity, ii. 441,
He quoted, i. 20, 2[illegible]
—Magians, the[illegible]
M[illegible] quoted, i. 4[illegible]

Malebranche quoted, ii. 475, *Note* [D]. 487, *Note* [T].
Malice, whence it is derived, ii. 200.
Mandeville, (Dr.) quoted, i. 297.
Manilius quoted, ii. 416.
Marcellinus, (Ammianus) quoted, i. 565, *Note* [NN].
Martial quoted, i. 407. 414. 466. ii. 503, *Note* [XX].
Mary, Virgin, became a Deity among the Catholics, ii. 430.
Maſſacres, ancient, enumerated from Diodorus Siculus, i. 557, *Note* [BB].
Mathematics, their Foundation, ii. 485, *Note* [P]. their Advantages, 65.
Maurice, Prince of Orange, his Saying, ii. 315.
Melon, Monſieur, quoted, i. 272. 553, *Note* [Q].
Memory, its Merit, whence derived, ii. 289.
Menander quoted, i. 547, *Note* [H].
Merit, perſonal, how the object of Pride, ii. 187.
—— delineated, ii. 319, &c.
Metaphyſics, what, ii. 7, 8.
Mine, Thine, ii. 244.
Miracles, on what their Evidence is founded, ii. 117, &c.
———— defined, ii. 122. one mentioned by De Retz. 131.
Mixture of Affections, ii. 182.
Modeſty, whence its Merit, ii. 313.
Moliere, i. 140.
Moliniſts, their Genius, i. 80. ii. 481.
Monarchy, elective, hereditary, which preferable, i. 17.
Monarchy, and Republic, their Advantages and Diſadvantages with regard to the Arts, i. 129, 130, 131.
Money, its continued Encreaſe advantageous, i. 302.
——— its Diffuſion advantageous, i. 306, 307.
Montaigne quoted, ii. 372.
Monteſquieu quoted, i. 399. 466. ii. 487, *Note* [T.]
Monumentum Ancyrianum quoted, i. 451.
Morals, their Standard, i. 242.
——— not fluctuating, ii. 390.
Morality hurt by popular Religions, ii. 461.
Moral Cauſes, have chief Influence on Populouſneſs, i. 401.
Muſcovites, their Manners, i. 137.

Nepos, Cornelius, quoted, i. 409.
Neri, and Bianchi, Parties in Florence, i. 57.
Newton, Sir Isaac, his rule of philosophizing, ii. 251,
Newton, Locke, Clarke, Arians, and sincere, ii. 506. *Note* [DDD].
Nicholas, Saint, became a Deity among the Muscovites, ii. 430.
Nisus, or strong Endeavour, not the Origin of the Idea of Power, ii. 474. *Note* [C].
Northern Nations, their Swarms, no Proof of Populousness, i. 4[illegible].
Numatianu[illegible] Claudius Rutilius, his Contempt of the Jewish, and consequen[illegible]y of the Christian Religion, ii. 450.

O

OBEDIENCE, passive, i. 495, *&c.*
Obligation, interested, to Virtue, ii. 330.
Olympiodorus quoted, i. 565.
Opinion, the real Foundation of Government, i. 29.
Orange, the family of, their Partizans, i. 67.
Oratoribus, Dialog. de, quoted, i. 224.
Ostracism of Athens, Petalism of Syracuse, i. 354.
Ovid quoted, i. 118. 132. 403. 459. 461. ii. 416. 419. 461.

P

PAINTERS, modern, unhappy in their Subjects, i. 240.
Paper Credit and Banks, whether advantageous, i. 301. 336, 337,
Paris, L'Abbe de, his Miracles, ii. 481.
Parliament, how far it should be independent, i. 43, *&c.*
Parnel, Dr. his Character as a Writer, i. 211.
Parties in general, i. 55. personal, 56. real, 59, 60.
——— of Great Britain, i. 65, *&c.*
Pascal his Character, ii. 405, quoted, 489.
Passions, their Kinds, ii. 177. their Objections and Causes, 184.
Paterculus quoted, i. [illegible]. 440.
Pathetic and Sublime [illegible] 209.
Pausanias quoted, [illegible]
Pay, Proportion [illegible] anciently, i. 418.

Pericles, his Eloquence, i. 113.
Peripatetics; their mediums, ii. 281.
Perſecution, whence derived, i. 61, 62. naturally attends the Principle of Unity of God, ii. 437.
Perſia, ancient, whether poſſeſſed of an Ariſtocracy, i. 541.
Perſonify, to, natural, and the Origin of Polytheiſm, ii. 4[illegible]1.
Petrarch quoted, i. 266.
Petronius quoted, i. 4[illegible]8. 459. ii. 390.
Phædrus quoted, ii. 49[illegible]. *Note* [X].
Philip of Macedon, his Character in Demoſthenes, ii. 30[illegible].
——— his Occupation in the infernal Re[illegible]s, i. 189.
Philip II. of Spain, i. 98.
Philoſophy, the two Kinds of it, the obv[illegible]us and abſtruſe, ii. 3.
Phyſical Cauſes, their ſmall Influence [illegible]n Populouſneſs, i. 398.
Pindar, his Scholiaſt quoted, i. 146.
Plato quoted, i. 92. 369. 442. 493. ii. 3[illegible] 388. 455. 487. *Note* [S]. 490, *Note* [X]. 504, *Note* [ZZ].
Platoniſt, i. 165.
Plautus quoted, i. 444.
Pliny the Elder quoted, i. 137. 237. 312. 342. 412. 454. 456. 543, *Note* [C]. 557, *Note* [AA]. 562, *Note* [LL]. ii. 407. 451. 503, *Note* [YY]. 504. *Note* [AAA].
——— a Paſſage of his examined, i. 563.
Pliny the Younger, his Houſe, i. 451. quoted, i. 137. 325. ii. 421.
Plutarch quoted, i. 133, 134. 187. 189. 218. 228. 302. 327. 369. 389, 390. 403. 409. 413. 415. 420. 423, 426. 431, 440. 441. 446. 464. 468. ii. 224. 275. 302. 388. 421. 438, 441. 459.
——— A Paſſage of his examined, i. 466.
Politeneſs, whence its Merit, ii. 311.
Politics, a Science, i. 13, &c.
Political Cuſtoms of Ancients and Moderns compared, i. 415, 416.
Pollia and Papiria, Roman Tribes, their Animoſity, i. 57.
Polybius quoted, i. 19. 133. 312. 341. 356, 357, 418. 439. 449. 459. 461. 479. 541, *Note* [B]. 552, *Note* [O]. ii.

Presence, real, ii. 445.
Pressing Seamen, i. 395.
Priest, his Character, i. 214.
Priests, their Origin, i. 77.
Prior, Mr. quoted, i. 146.
Pride, whence it arises, ii. 186.
Probability, what, ii. 61. 119.
Promise, what, and whence its Obligation, i. 475.
——— not the Origin of Government, ib.
Proof, what, ii. 61. 119.
Property, its Equality impracticable, ii. 242. defended, 245.
——— why the Source of Pride, ii. 193.
Protestant Succession, its Advantages and Disadvantages, i. 511.
Providence, particular, on what founded, ii. 151.
Provinces, under what Government most oppressed, i. 17.
Pyrrhus, his Saying of the Romans, i. 292.

Q

QUAKERS, their Character, i. 78, 79.
Quinctilian quoted, i. 98. 108. 218. ii. 273. 315. 454.

R

RACINE, his Character, i. 209. quoted, 265. ii. 483.
Ramsay, Chevalier, quoted, ii. 507.
Reason, when it influences Action, only a cooler Passion, i. 474.
——— how far the Source of Morals, ii. 216.
Reason and Taste, their boundaries, i. 244.
Reason more precarious than Taste, i. 259.
Reasons of State, ii. 254.
Refinement, in what respect useful, i. 311.
Regnard his Voyage to Lapland, quoted, ii. 416.
Relations of Ideas, one Object of Reason, ii. 27.
Religion, two principal Questions with regard to it, ii. 401.
——— its first Principles, not primary but secondary, ii. 4[illegible]4.
Resemblance, a Source of Associatio[illegible] i. 24. 55.
Retz, Cardinal de, quoted, i. 534.
Revolution, in 1688, [illegible] Contr[illegible], i. 478.
Rhamadan of the T[illegible] ii. 4[illegible]
Rhodes, Number [illegible]
Riches, why the [illegible] i. 294.
Rochefoucault q[illegible]
Rome, i. 57. 9[illegible]

Rome, ancient, its Size and Number of Inhabitants, i. 452, 453.
——— Name of its tutelar Deity, concealed, ii. 504, *Note* [AAA].
Romans, when most corrupt, i. 22. anciently Pirates, i. 552. their Government under the Empire not burdensome, i. 300.
Roman Empire, whether advantegous, i. 466.
Roundhead Party, i. 69.
Rousseau quoted, i. 131.
Rowe, Mr. his Tragedy censured, i. 239.

S

SADDER contains little Morality, ii. 461.
Sallee, Prince of, his Saying of De Ruyter, ii. 446.
Sallust quoted, i. 97. 132. 293. 425. 4[illegible]2. ii. 393. 370. 456: 465.
Saint Evremond's Character of Turenne, ii. 285.
——— quoted, ii. 301.
Sannazarius, Censure of his Pastorals, ii. 271.
Scapulaire, what, ii. 433.
Scepticism, ii. 27. 46. excessive, 159, *&c.* moderate, 160. with regard to the Senses, 161. with regard to Reason, 166. Religious, ii. 451.
Sceptic, the, i. 171.
Sciences, their Division, ii. 173.
Scholastic Religion, its usual Absurdity, ii. 442.
Scriptures, holy, quoted, ii. 232. 372.
Scriptural and traditional Religions compared, ii. 452.
Selfish and Social not opposite, ii. 332.
Self-love not the Foundation of moral Sentiment, ii. 323.
Seneca quoted, i. 404. 408. 411. 415. ii. 356. 374. 418.
Seneca the Elder quoted, i. 413.
Sentiment, how far the Source of Morals, ii. 216. 338.
Sextus Empiricus quoted, i. 415. ii. 227. 420. 456. 490. *Note* [X].
Shaftesbury, Lord, quoted, i. 93. 135. 391.

Soldiers, what Proportion they commonly bear to the People, i. 293.
Sophocles, his Character, i. 209.
Spain, ancient and modern, its Inhabitants, i. 464.
Spaniard, his Politenefs, ii. 312.
Sparta, its Policy, i. 273. Number of its Inhabitants, 448.
Spartian quoted, i. 564. ii. 450.
Spencer quoted, ii. 305.
Sportula, their bad tendency, i. 466.
Stanian quoted, i. 342.
States, fmall, their Advantage, i. 417.
Stoic, the, i. 153.
Stoics, their idea of Providence, ii. 107.
——— their Superftition, ii. 454.
Strabo quoted, i. 36[illegible]. 407, 408. 411. 438. 442. 456. 460. 463, 465. 467. [illegible]50, *Note* [K]. 562, *Note* [KK]. 566, *Note* [NN]. ii. 415. 439.
Stuart Family, whether their Succeffion ought to have been retained, i. 511. whether reftored, 520.
Subjects particular, fuit not with Refinement, i. 269.
Suetonius quoted, i. 19. 403. 407. 451. 453, 454. 466. 543. *Note* [C]. ii. 131. 382. 418. 439. 451.
Suidas quoted, i. 113. 566, *Note* [QQ].
Superftition defined, i. 76, 77, &c.
Swift, Dr. quoted, i. 329. 344, 559, *Note* [DD]. ii. 284.
Sycophant, its original Senfe, i. 327.
Sympathy, the great Source of moral Sentiment, ii. 270. 300.
Syracufe, its Extent and Number of Inhabitants, i. 448.

T

TACITUS, fomewhat fuperftitious, though profane, ii. 454. quoted, i. 10. 19. 67. 120. 134. 384. 407. 410. 415. 422. 451. 462. 467. 482. 552, *Note* [P]. 557, *Note* [AA]. ii. 130. 304. 426. 454. 496, *Note* [LL]. 505, *Note* [CCC].
Taffo quoted, i. 148.
Tafte, its Standard, i. 241.
Taxes, when hurtful, i. 363, 364.
——— do not fall ultimately on La[illegible]
Temple, Sir William [illegible] 95. 22[illegible]
Tendency of Actions [illegible] their [illegible]quences, regarded in Morals[illegible]
Terence, his Char[illegible]
Tertullian quote[illegible]

Thebes, Number of its Inhabitants, i. 447.
Theiſm, its Origin from Polytheiſm, ii. 426.
Theiſm and Polytheiſm, compared, ii. 436.
Theocritus, i. 439.
Thinkers, abſtruſe, how uſeful, i. 269, ſhallow, ibid.
Thucydides, the firſt Hiſtorian, i. 439.
——— quoted, i. 190. 273. 341. 355. 418. 425. 433. 438. 443, 444. 449. ii. 3[illegible]4. 441.
Timon of Athens, his affection to Alcibiades, ii. 275.
Timotheus the Poet, his Hymn to Diana, ii. 459.
Tillotſon, his Argument againſt the real Preſence, ii. 117.
Toleration naturally attends Polytheiſm, ii. 436.
Tory Party, i. 63. their ſpeculative Syſtem, i. 471.
Tot, Monſ. du, quoted, i. 553, *Note* [Q].
Tournefort, Monſ. quoted, i. 200. 459.
Tragedy, why it pleaſes, i. 231.
Tranquility of Mind, whence its Merit, ii. 305.
Treaſures, their Effects, i. 336.
Turkiſh Government, i. 368.
Tyrannicide, why blameable, ii. 228.
Tyrants, ancient, their Cruelty, i. 426.

U

USTARIZ, Geronimo de, quoted, i. 400.
Uſurpation, what, i. 479.
Utility, a Source of Approbation, ii. 226. why, 261.
——— to others, ii. 349. to ourſelves, 299.

V

VALERIUS Maximus, quoted, i. 562, *Note* [LL].
Vanity, allies eaſily to Virtue, i. 90. why blamed, ii. 316.
Varro quoted, i. 407. 412. 413. 459, 465 ii. 449.
Vauban quoted, i. 334.
Vega, Garcillaſſo de la, quoted, i. [illegible]

Vitellius, his Meanneſs, ii. 302.
Vitruvius quoted, i. 562, *Note* [KK].
Voluntary and involuntary, why made by the Moderns ſo eſſential to Morals, ii. 375.
Voltaire quoted, i. 11.
Vopiſcus quoted, i. 448. 454. 566, *Note* [OO].
Voſſius quoted, i. 399. 564.

W

WALLER, his Character, i. 141.
Wiſdom, its Merit, whence, ii. 288.
Wit or Ingenuity, its Merit, whence, ii. 312.
Whig Party, i. 69, their ſpeculative Syſtem, i. 471.
Wolſey, Cardinal, i. 1[illegible]4.
Women, timorous and ſuperſtitious, ii. 414.
Wonder, the Paſſion of, inclines us to believe Miracles, ii. 125.

X

XENOPHON, his Superſtition, ii. 505, *Note* [DDD].
——— quoted, i. 92. 100. 353, 354. 411. 418. 427. 435. 444, 445. 447, 448. 461. ii. 293 383. 437. 458.
Xerxes, his Purſuit of new pleaſures, i 144.